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PRAYER AND ITS PSYCHOLOGY

Prayer and its Psychology

BY THE REV.

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PREFACE

It gives me great pleasure to write a brief word in commendation of this book. It is on a subject of very great importance, and I believe that Dr. Hodge has made a real contribution to the better understanding of it. A great deal is being written in these days on the application of psychology to religion, and very much of it has to be taken with a grain of salt; but those who will take the trouble to follow Dr. Hodge's line of argument will soon discover that he is a really reliable guide, and that he writes not only with full technical knowledge but with a saving common sense. It is true that the only royal road to understanding and appreciating the power of prayer is by praying, but a knowledge of the underlying psychical processes at work is always useful, and in many cases may help to make the practice of prayer more helpful and more real. I feel sure that Dr. Hodge's careful study of the subject will help towards this end.

W. B. SELBIE.

(Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford.)

INTRODUCTION

CHRISTIANITY is faced with what is undoubtedly one of the greatest crises of its history. New and subtle oppositions are arising externally, and certain internal discords are weakening its power to triumph. At the same time, this very crisis presents the Christian Church with unparalleled opportunities for conquest, and there are many hopeful signs that she will not fail.

The Church is called upon to face an entirely new and worldwide evil in the form of what has been called "secular civilization."* Her principal challenge comes no longer from non-Christian religions. It is not Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, or Confucianism that constitute the greatest obstacle to the spread of Christianity, but the universal obsession of mankind with the natural, the material, and the non-religious. It is the scientific and utilitarian interpretation of life, and not the religious, which dominates the thought and conduct of the masses in this era. All religions are facing the same problem, for religion itself is on its trial. What the East wants from the West, it has been truly said, is not our Christianity, but our modern science, our modern commerce, and our modern political organization. These importations spell decay and death, not so much to the Eastern religions, as systems of worship, but to the religious spirit and the religious interpretation of life which is the root and basis of all worship.

It will not be disputed that the predominant factor in

* Dr. Rufus Jones at the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, 1928. Cf. W. Fearon Halliday, "The Psychology of Religious Experience," p. 200.

this universal secularizing of civilization is the new scientific thought. Not that the challenge of science is new—there are close affinities between the rationalism of the eighteenth century and our present-day naturalistic trend—but that there are new developments of science in terms of psychology, biology, anthropology, and eugenics which are peculiar to the twentieth century. So much of what was formerly regarded as supernatural has been reduced to the natural, and so much prominence has been given to the human factor in historical religion that there has arisen a new humanism which finds adequate satisfaction in secular values; and while on the whole, perhaps, it is not anti-religious, it is predominantly non-religious and non-transcendental. Co-operating with this naturalistic trend of thought, and accentuated by it, there is the pressure of modern life, the economic interests which dominate so many lives, compelling the focus of attention on the immediate and the material.

Christianity will survive the trial. Man cannot live by bread alone, and even the admittedly high values obtaining in non-religious circles, such as those of integrity, loyalty, sympathy, and love, even these will fail ultimately to satisfy him. Meanwhile the task of the Christian Church is to preserve a tolerant and open mind to the new advances in thought, to regard these new adventures in science not so much as usurpations of ecclesiastical territory but as potential allies in the great cause of Truth, which is her peculiar trust.

Science, after all, is not maliciously iconoclastic. It boasts an honourable and a sacrificial passion for truth, and in its best expressions abhors prejudice. The moral discipline implied in the quest for truth is actuated by a spirit which is essentially religious, although, perhaps, infrequently identified with religion. Christianity has little to fear from science *qua* science, but the naturalistic philosophies, which owe their inspiration to modern scien-

tific advance, present a challenge which must be met. In particular, those systems of thought associated with the New Psychology dispute the validity of Christian experience, and seek to throw the shadow of subjectivity over the religious interpretation of reality.

Dogmatism will not suffice to meet the modern challenge. The world demands from the Christian Church a reason for the hope that is in her, and that reason must be given, in terms intelligible to the modern mind.

It must be recognized that while religion is concerned with the transcendental, and its primary and ultimate reference is to a supramundane and ideal realm, it is nevertheless essentially and intensely human, and its peculiar appeal and characteristic urgency are manifested in terms of human thought and conduct. The faith which religion presupposes can never be wholly divorced from the rational processes of the mind, however lofty and sublime the faith-postulate may be. Seeing, then, that religion can never be wholly "other-worldly," but is a matter of human experience, and is therefore mediated and expressed by processes of thought and conduct, as are all the dominant interests of man, religious thought will differ from secular thought only in content, and not in form. It will obey the psychological laws relevant to all thinking, and will be equally susceptible of psychological analysis.

"A revelation absolutely transcending reason is an absurdity; no such revelation could ever be made."* Thought operates on our value-experiences and gives them an order appropriate to rational living, and the contribution of reason to the determination of religious validity cannot be denied. On the other hand, there are elements in the religious experience which transcend reason.

* Inge, "Christian Mysticism," p. 19.

In a word, valid religion is an appeal to the whole personality, and involves conative and emotional as well as cognitive elements.

While the right of reason to subject religious experience to the test of rationality must be maintained, the essential limitation of the sphere of reason must also be recognized in any attempt to discuss the psychology of religion. Experience, through which alone values are known, involves factors which cannot be reduced to terms of rational relationship. These are the volitional and the affective. The failure to realize the limited scope of intellectual processes in relation to spiritual religion led to undue emphasis on the famous theistic proofs of the existence of God. We now realize that rational processes are inadequate to demonstrate the truth of religious experience, and that feeling is nearer the root, and has no practical value apart from the purposive control of volition.

The purpose of the present essay is to furnish a contribution toward the vindication of the Christian Gospel in terms of modern psychological thought. Attention will be concentrated upon one aspect of religion, that of prayer, and those concepts of the New Psychology which are most relevant to the study of prayer will be examined with a view to discovering what light they throw upon the activities of the prayerful mind, and to what extent the anti-religious philosophical systems associated with the New Psychology may claim to invalidate prayer as involving an objectively real Divine-human relationship.

Prayer has been described as religion in action. It is the centre and soul of all religion, and upon the question of its validity depends the trustworthiness of religious experience in general. If psychology can invalidate prayer it has succeeded in disproving the whole of religion. On the other hand, if prayer withstands the test of the new thought, then religion as a whole is vindicated.

Without begging the question of the validity of the

objective reference of prayer, we may note the fact that prayer is very generally a concomitant of religion. Wherever the religious spirit exists, there prayer is its direct expression; indeed, the evidence for the existence and the nature of the religious attitude consists in great measure of the prayers of the worshippers. Professor Heiler in his monumental work, "Das Gebet," says: "In den Gebetsworten dürfen wir die tiefsten und intimsten Regungen der frommen Seele belauschen."* Treatises on the history of religion and studies in comparative religion abound in illustrations from prayer. Whatever be the justification for the religious attitude, it is indisputable that prayer is its natural utterance. Prayer is a universal phenomenon which must be taken into account in any attempt to approach the study of religion from the psychological standpoint.

If religion be defined as "a felt practical relationship with what are believed in as a superhuman being or beings,"† or, again, as "Man's faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gain stability of life, and which he expresses in acts of worship and service,"‡ we may define prayer as the utterance of the human spirit, based upon the consciousness of that relationship. It is the natural expression of the religious spirit, and, whatever be the legitimate deductions from primitive data, the modern religions are essentially religions of prayer. "There is no part of the religious service of mankind that so clearly reveals the various views of the divine nature held by the different races at the different stages of their development as the formulæ of prayer, or reflects so vividly the material and

* "In the expressions of prayer we may hear the profoundest and most intimate movements of the devout soul" ("Das Gebet," p. 2).

† Thouless, "Social Psychology," p. 353.

‡ Galloway, "Philosophy of Religion," p. 184.

psychologic history of man.”* Prayer makes articulate the worshipper’s conception of the deities or deity, and gives definite indication of the relationship conceived to exist between God and man.

The study of prayer may be approached from three supplementary and interrelated standpoints. Examined in the light of anthropology, it is seen in its relationship with other forms of worship, and may be distinguished from methods of approach to the Divine which are quasi-religious. Regarded psychologically, prayer manifests certain operations of the mind which may be analyzed and examined with reference to modern thought. Lastly, from the standpoint of philosophy, prayer involves certain presuppositions respecting the nature of the human soul and the existence of God, which must be substantiated if the validity of religious experience is to be maintained.

All three methods of approach are adopted in the following pages. The line of argument is as follows:

Discussion of the nature of prayer will include the consideration of various attempts to define prayer, and will provide an opportunity to construct a more detailed definition for ourselves. The problem of the universality of religion in general and of prayer in particular will demand attention, and that will lead us on to the study of the origin and evolution of prayer in the religious consciousness. It will be imperative that at this stage there should be formulated a clear pronouncement as to the nature of the religious consciousness. The volitional, affective, and cognitive factors will be considered in the light of the subject of the thesis. The views expounded by Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Lotze must be considered. In regard to the origin of prayer, the great problem of its relation to magic cannot be passed over. The development of prayer is a great subject in itself, and its consideration must of necessity be limited. The de-

* Farnell, “Evolution of Religion,” p. 163.

velopment of worship is coincident with the growth of religion from Tribal, through National, to Universal. When the religious relationship is recognized as an individual, and not exclusively and fundamentally a social relationship, prayer becomes predominantly the expression of a deepened personality, and the personal factor asserts itself with less restraint.

The specifically psychological section of the essay will be introduced by a chapter on the psychological conditions presupposed by prayer. There are common psychological conditions underlying all types of religion, from savage to civilized—viz., belief in the existence of spirit-powers, in their accessibility, and in the possibility of communion with them.

Much valuable light has been thrown upon religion by the modern study of the instincts. The significance of the so-called dominant instincts—those of the ego, sex, and the herd—for the understanding of prayer will prove to be very great. Further, does prayer fulfil the conditions essential to successful suggestion? Is auto-suggestion the whole of prayer, as some infer, or is that concept inadequate to account for all the phenomena associated with prayer? Or, again, is the attitude of mind involved in worship conducive to hetero-suggestion, leading to enhanced suggestibility and receptivity on the part of the worshipper? These are questions discussed at length in the chapter on Prayer and Suggestion.

The purpose of the section dealing with the concepts of the New Psychology will be to demonstrate the essential normality of the prayer-state, and to show that the mental processes involved are characteristic of secular as well as religious thought.

The further step will then be taken of providing a philosophical basis for the psychology of prayer. The validity of prayer as a real and effective intercourse may be disputed in two respects. First, it may be maintained

that it presupposes a theory of the nature of the human soul which is animistic and contrary to certain well-established hypotheses regarding the relationship between mind and body. Secondly, a subjectivistic philosophy has arisen which disputes the validity of the idea of God involved in prayer, and regards the objective references of religion as initiated by the projective activity of complex-burdened minds.

The concluding section of the essay will, accordingly, be devoted to the consideration of the philosophical issues raised by the study of prayer, and considerations will be offered which demonstrate the weaknesses of the "psychology without a soul" and the philosophy of naturalism, and which vindicate the claim of the Christian that prayer is real intercourse between man and God.

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PRAYER AND ITS PSYCHOLOGY

PART I

THE NATURE AND EVOLUTION OF PRAYER

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF PRAYER

THE immediate aim of this chapter is to discuss and define the meaning of the phenomenon of prayer. The psychology of prayer cannot be adequately investigated until we have answered the fundamental question, What is prayer? And the whole scope and nature of our study depends upon our answer to that question.

Meaning is relative. It is, as Boyce Gibson states, "a product of thought in its relation to reality, or of reality in relation to thought . . . it tells us what an object is in relation to a specific interest or purpose." In our approach to the study of prayer a great deal depends on our "specific interest or purpose." From the standpoint of devotional theology, prayer is naturally stated in the ideal forms it assumes in the higher religious consciousness. To adopt such a standpoint would be to narrow unduly the scope of the essay, and probably invalidate much of it by uncritically accepting certain psychological assumptions that lie embedded in the corpus of theological writings. The nature of prayer cannot be adequately considered apart from its relation to, and differentiation from, forms of behaviour that belong to the

same generic type, such as magic, incantation, and spell, for many primitive features of prayer can still be traced, often in a thinly disguised form, in the higher religions of to-day.

Not only in relation to the *type* of prayer, but also in regard to the *nature* of it, due care must be exercised in the framing of a definition. Is prayer merely petition, or does it include all utterances of the religious spirit?

The broader definition is the only adequate one. Petition is, indeed, a frequent and predominant element in prayer, but a scientific study of this phase of religious activity could not exclude such basic elements as adoration and thanksgiving. The study of prayer, then, to be sufficiently exhaustive, must be concerned not only with origins and with cognate developments but also with the various elements which enter into its nature in its higher and more ideal forms. For this reason the definition offered by C. F. D'Arcy commends itself:

"Prayer is not necessarily petition, the asking for benefits. Any intercourse of a human soul with higher powers may rightly be termed prayer. For the monotheist prayer is intercourse with God."

With this may be compared the equally broad definition offered by Jeremy Taylor:

"Prayer is an ascent of the mind to God. All the forms of such ascent—adoration, confession, thanksgiving as well as petition, seeking for definite gifts—may be included in the generic term prayer. Prayer is in general the communion of the human soul with God."

It would be difficult to be too liberal in delineating the range of prayer. From the selfish creed and crude petitions of the savage to the intensely spiritual ecstasies of the mystic; from the stereotyped forms of institutional worship to the free prayers of the religious genius; from the childlike simplicity of the untrained mind to the philosophic supplication—in short, from that utterance or

attitude of the soul, which barely enters within the compass of the broader definition of prayer, to that intensely religious approach to the Deity based on a clear conception of the human-Divine relationship, that is the range of prayer, and an adequate definition of prayer must be sufficiently catholic to include all types.

There are two methods of procedure, either of which may be followed in a discussion such as this—first, to attempt a survey of existing definitions of prayer, and having indicated their virtues and weaknesses to frame our own definition; or, second, to venture a definition of our own, and subsequently to analyze and examine other definitions in the light of its implications. Both methods have weighty precedents, but the latter is preferable for our purpose. It is, in essence, a statement of one's own conception as to the requirements of such a definition and a testing examination of other attempts in accordance with that conception.

Viewed, then, from the scientific, as distinct from the devotional, aspect, prayer may be defined as follows:

PRAYER IS INTERCOURSE WITH AN IDEAL BEING, OR BEINGS, CONCEIVED AS OBJECTIVELY EXISTENT, SUPERIOR, PERSONAL, AND RESPONSIVE.

This definition is sufficiently exhaustive to form the basis of an analysis of prayer, and it is sufficiently general to include all those utterances of the religious spirit to which the term "prayer" may be applied. It is necessary, however, to add a supplementary note covering three points integral to the present discussion, as follows:

Prayer, as the central act of religion, is universal, and reflects the forms of human social relationship. As a genuine phenomenon of the psychical life, it presupposes definite psychological conditions and produces definite psychological effects.

Our discussion of the nature of prayer will therefore centre upon the following four points:

First, an analysis of the ideas or conceptions presupposed by the act;

Second, an examination of the scope of prayer. Is it universal?

Third, a preliminary note as to its predominantly social character; and

Fourth, an introduction to the salient features of its psychology.

1. *Definite Ideas of the Divine* are presupposed by the act of prayer, ideas of real existence, superiority, personality, and responsiveness.

That prayer involves a belief in the objective reality of a Divine Being would go without saying were it not that some efforts have been made to explain its nature and vindicate its use as a purely subjective exercise. To the question, When a man ceases to believe in the existence of God, need he cease to pray? or, Is religious belief essential to prayer? the answer has been given—No, its psycho-therapeutic value remains apart altogether from religious associations. It becomes auto-suggestion.

More will be said in a later chapter about suggestion in relation to religion, and we need anticipate that fuller discussion only to the extent of pointing out how contrary is such an answer to the sober facts of human experience. It would be difficult, if not wholly impossible, to find a healthy-minded man who prays without addressing his prayer to some external Power or powers. It would be equally difficult to discover a thoroughgoing believer in the inevitability of atheism who so valued the act of prayer as distinct from the fact of God that he indulged in regular prayerful expostulations with himself. In practice, unbelief in the religious postulate and belief in prayer are irreconcilable; in theory, the idea is based on a false psychology. Auto-suggestion without religion may be

possible—although there are strong and cogent reasons for believing that auto-suggestion involves a religious attitude towards life as a whole*—and prayer, in many of its forms, involves enhanced suggestibility; but if there is such a thing as non-religious auto-suggestion, it is not prayer, however broad a definition of the latter term may be adopted. As will be shown more fully in Chapter VII., auto-suggestion is, after all, a relative term, and the ideas or mental states involved are related to definite antecedents.

Prayer demands belief in the real and objective existence of God. "If man at any stage of his history had been able to find his complete good within his immediate environment, he would have ceased to be religious."† This search for his complete good has led man to postulate a supramundane Being as at once really existent and accessible. Philosophically, of course, such a belief can be reached only after the rejection of some modern systems—e.g., the Hegelian philosophy, which treats religion along purely immanent lines—but whether prayerful man be philosophical or not, it is making no assumption to concede the point made by James,‡ that the genuineness of religion is indissolubly bound up with the question whether the prayerful consciousness be or be not deceitful. "The conviction that something is genuinely transacted in this consciousness is the very core of living religion."

In the next place, our definition of prayer gives *Superiority* as an element in the worshipper's idea of the Divine. Prayer uniformly involves the conception of superiority, if not of sovereignty. Where that element is lacking, prayer gives place to magic, and communion becomes predominantly compulsion; supplication becomes

* W. Brown, "Religion and Life," p. 314.

† Galloway, "Philosophy of Religion," p. 185.

‡ "Varieties," p. 466.

fused with coercion, and reduces itself to a dictatorial tyranny over the spirit or spirits, a tyranny expressed in the crude technique of magic.

In the earlier stages of religion it is difficult, if not wholly impossible, to disentangle the religious and the magical, and the principle of superiority in prayer may not appear to be universal. The late Professor L. T. Hobhouse, for example, claimed that the greater part of the beings worshipped by primitive man are intellectually and morally less than human. The savage deceives his deity by methods which could hardly take place in the savage man himself. The Naga, for instance, placates his god by offering him a small fowl in a large basket. The god, being deceived by the size of the basket, becomes magnanimous and rewards the worshipper accordingly.*

Now, in the light of this it may seem that our statement of the superiority principle in prayer needs modification, but we must not overlook the fact that pure religion and undefiled is unknown to primitive man. He may worship a deity for a certain superior power, and at the same time attribute to him inferiority in other respects. Take, for example, the prayer of the Toda, cited by Hobhouse. The prayer is addressed to a cow, chosen by descent or by consecration to be the head of the herd, as being herself a goddess—"How fair was thy Mother! How much milk she gave! Henceforth thou shalt be a divinity among us . . . bear a thousand calves." "Yet," says the author quoted, "the animal which is worshipped is also unhesitatingly turned to human uses." This is, of course, quite true, although the totem sacrament forbids us to doubt the standing of a divinity because of its consumption by the worshipper. Yet, surely, the cow-deity has the superiority required for prayer, crude and elementary as that utterance may be. It is precisely because the animal can be turned to human uses, and is thus repre-

* "Morals in Evolution," ii. p. 12.

sentative of her kind, that she is worshipped. She is superior to man in that she supplies that which he cannot otherwise obtain for himself. Our postulate of the superiority involved in the worshipper's idea of the Divine needs no modification if the weak intellection of the savage is borne in mind.

Further, the exercise of prayer involves belief in the *personality* of the Deity. A mere—albeit wonderful—system of natural forces can never be the object of worship or prayer, as we conceive of that religious act. Huxley's Ultimate, the Cosmic Ether, is not a reality to which one addresses prayer. Neither will the savage pray to the great forces of nature unless he can personify them.

From the philosophical standpoint there are difficulties in this attribution of personality to a free and perfect Being—difficulties which will be considered in the concluding chapter of this book. From the psychological standpoint, and that is our immediate concern, the fact that the religious relationship involved in prayer invariably presupposes the attribution of personality to the Deity is of primary importance. Any definition of prayer, to be adequate, must, therefore, take into account this fact of the faith-postulate accompanying it. Thus Farnell, in an otherwise somewhat meagre definition, emphasizes the personal aspect of prayer:

“According to the modern definition of prayer, a man addresses uttered or inaudible speech to a Divine power conceived as spirit or God, but always as personal, in order to obtain material, moral, or spiritual blessings”*—a definition which arbitrarily reduces all prayer to petition, and leaves out of consideration those forms in which the worshipper seeks nothing other than to offer praise and thanksgiving.

In Tylor's monumental work we get a more satisfactory statement of the nature of prayer, emphasizing both

* “Evolution of Religion,” p. 165.

its personal aspect and also the conceived superiority and responsiveness of the Deity. It constitutes, in addition, an admirable statement of the social character of prayer.

"Prayer," says Tylor, "the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed, is the address of personal spirit to personal spirit. So far as it is actively addressed to disembodied or deified human souls, it is simply an extension of the daily intercourse between man and man, while the worshipper who looks up to other Divine Beings, spiritual after the nature of his own spirit, though of place and power in the universe far beyond his own, still has his mind in a state where prayer is a reasonable and practical act."*

The question of personality in relation to primitive worship is bound up with that of the relationship of magic and religion. According to R. R. Marett, personification follows the decay of magic; prayer evolves from spell along the line of personification and deification. A criticism of this theory will be offered in the next chapter.

Proceeding with the analysis of our definition, we note that all prayer presupposes *responsiveness* on the part of the Deity addressed. To that extent all prayer, whether savage or civilized, is communion. It is the psychological act by which the human spirit seeks, and claims to find, conscious contact with the Divine. If there were no belief in the accessibility and responsiveness of the object of worship, there would be no true prayer. It is possible to show that this is true of the lowest forms of religion of which we have evidence, but it is conspicuously true of those higher forms with which we are more familiar. The very soul of the Christian's belief in prayer is found in this conception of the responsiveness of God. He endorses the testimony of the Psalmist—"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"†—and his approach to God is made in the light of the

* "Primitive Culture," ii. p. 364.

† Ps. xxxiv. 4.

revelation of Jesus Christ—"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

All these elements—real existence, superiority, personality, and responsiveness—are found in devout man's idea of God. We have next to enquire, What is the scope of prayer? Is it universal?

2. *The Universality of Prayer* is questioned, naturally enough, by those who deny the universality of religion. It may be doubted, for example, whether Dr. Tylor accepts the universality of prayer, for he says: "At low levels of civilization there are many races who distinctly admit the existence of spirits, but are not positively known to pray to them. Beyond this lower level, however, animism and ceremonial prayer become nearly conterminous."† This statement, however, is bound up with Tylor's theory of the relationship between animism and religion, and need not be regarded as more than a confession of the scarcity of data relating to early animistic belief. "Races who distinctly admit the existence of spirits" are most probably races who have some manner of spiritual commerce with them, and to such intercourse we need not hesitate to apply the name prayer.

The language of gesture was earlier than speech, and the absence of spoken prayers from the records relating to primitive worship really proves little of moment. In certain Australian rites at the present day there are no spoken words used at all. It would be quite contrary to the established facts to describe these rites as prayerless, provided we adhere to our broad definition of prayer.

Jevons, in his "Idea of God," investigates the facts relating to the question of the universality of prayer, and finds that the case against universality lacks demonstrative evidence; that it is most in accord with anthropological data to postulate the co-extension of prayer with religion.

* Heb. iv. 16

† *Op. cit.* p. 364.

Both are universal, and the Christian apologist has good reason for calling attention to the worldwide and age-long assurance of man, that it is possible for him to establish intercourse and fellowship with God or the gods. It is difficult to escape the force of Fiske's argument, that a subjective need implies an objective stimulus which has provoked the need. The environment has always produced the appetite.

3. *Prayer is Predominantly Social.*—Religion is emphatically a social phenomenon; not only is its central act, prayer, inexplicable apart from reference to social forms, but religion itself is never exclusively individual. The higher or more individualistic religions are those which intensify most the social bonds. Of all religions and cults, it may be said that they are the unifying forces of the community, the tribe, or the nation, and, conversely, religious worship reflects the forms of human social relationship. In prayer, particularly, the values and forms which prevail in the social system receive articulate expression.

Religion furnishes a field for the exercise and sublimation of the human instincts. Among the chief of these are the gregarious instincts, which impel man to find delight in the company of his fellow-beings. Even the lowest types of Hottentots in Africa and the Veddahs in Ceylon, who boast "no more sociability than is found among gorillas," live together in scattered groups of two or three. There are influences which tell for or against the satisfaction of the gregarious instinct, and in proportion to the strength of these influences the social instinct develops or atrophies. But the social factor is always discoverable in religion, if not in religious worship then in the articulate conception of the relationship with the Deity, and most frequently in both ways; "the religious man hears God's voice in the commands of duty as he hears it in the revelation of truth, but both the command

or revelation, and the power to apprehend them, come through his share in social life.”*

Probably in no religious exercise is the essentially social character of religion more manifest than in prayer. It is there that religion receives its fullest expression, and religious conceptions clothe themselves in revealing language. The Divine-human relationship is expressed in terms of the human-human relationships, and such expressions are never merely accommodations; all religion is essentially more or less anthropomorphic, and the vast majority of recorded prayers bear unmistakable traces of the general attribution of human social relationships to the Divine. To what extent this attribution of human forms and associations to a supra-human realm is justifiable, or to what degree it may be said to invalidate prayer, is a question which cannot be answered in an introductory and psychological survey of the nature of prayer. We shall meet it again in a discussion of the significance of what is known as “projection” in regard to religion. Meanwhile, we note that, in defining the nature of prayer, adequate notice must be taken of the sociological implications of the subject, and recognition must be made of the universal colouring of religion by social types and relationships.

The definition of prayer offered by Dr. W. B. Selbie gives due recognition of this aspect, although the implicit indication of fear as the root of the desire for prayer is not adequate psychologically. Dr. Selbie makes it quite clear, however, in the earlier pages of his book, that early religious feeling takes other forms than that of fear, pure and simple. In reference to prayer, he says:

“Roughly speaking, prayer, like speech, is born of the desire for intercourse with others. It witnesses to the widespread and almost instinctive impulse of man to approach the powers around and above him in such a

* Fairbanks, “Introduction to Sociology,” p. 108.

way as that he shall avert their wrath and secure their favour.”*

In reviewing the salient features which present themselves to a student of prayer, we come next to notice that—

4. *The Psychology of Prayer* reveals its close association with the processes of the psychical life. The spiritual life is always deeply coloured by mental dispositions, and the instinctive tendencies of the mind are often directed and sublimated by spiritual attractions. “All enduring religion has specific psychological aspects material for the science of human nature, and, conversely, the psychological study of man is of the first importance for a better knowledge of his religious and other ‘deeper sides.’”†

There are widely differing theories as to the extent to which the religious life is influenced by the psychical life. Attempts have been made, notably by the Freudians, to attribute the whole of what commonly goes by the name of religion to the sublimation of the cardinal instincts. To their psychology these thinkers add a philosophy which is as weak as it is bold, but their investigations have brought to light well-authenticated facts relating to religion in its many phases. Deferring examination of the Freudian philosophy to the closing chapters of our study, we may note here that it is impossible adequately to account for religious phenomena without taking into account such mental processes as sublimation, rationalization, projection, and suggestion. This being true of religion in general, it is especially apposite in relation to the study of the prayer-life. It is there that the religious spirit reveals itself with all its complex relationships to the psychical life. In primitive prayer, as in the more refined prayer of advanced religion, emotional, volitional, and rational elements receive expression in many and

* “Psychology of Religion,” p. 207.

† S. A. Cook, “Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,” x. p. 669a.

varied forms. All such expression is coloured by the mentality of the worshipper, and religion in all its aspects brings into operation those well-defined psychical processes which constitute man's normal mode of thinking.

Finally, "in religion we have a department of human nature with unusually close relations to the subliminal region."* The psychological examination of religion reveals how much religious experience depends upon, and is influenced by, the subconscious in mental life. Particularly is this evident in prayer, which presupposes an attitude and condition of mind extraordinarily susceptible to "free uprisings" from the subconscious realm of the mind. In the more intense prayer-states, such as are exemplified in the lives of the mystics, Christian and non-Christian, there is a manifest retarding or cessation of conscious thought, and intercourse with God becomes, more or less, an affair of the subconscious. In secular psychology—that is, psychology as applied to non-religious thought—it is demonstrably true that the conscious mind is only part of a larger whole. There is always a more perfectly synthetized self, of which only fragmentary and transient glimpses are revealed. The application of this fact to religious thought and practice is not without its dangers, but on the whole it has thrown much welcome light on religion. Like most new theories, it is sometimes worked too hard, and is made to explain too much; but extremes apart, the Christian apologist has nothing to fear from the established findings of the newer psychological thought. Rather, as we shall endeavour to show, he may welcome all evidence which goes to establish the essential normality of religious thought.

To Friedrich Heiler, author of "Das Gebet," we are indebted for an admirable definition of prayer:

"Das Gebet ist also ein lebendiger Verkehr des

* W. James, *op. cit.* p. 483.

Frommen mit dem persönlich gedachten und als gegenwärtig erlebten Gott, ein Verkehr, der die Formen der menschlichen Gesellschaftsbeziehungen widerspiegelt.”*

In this concise definition are emphasized the living, the personal, the experiential, and the social character of prayer, characteristics which we have regarded as indispensable to an adequate definition. In all its forms and manifestations, prayer involves the conception of a personal and a more or less immediate relationship between the human and the Divine, and as the expression of a living desire directed heavenwards it manifests in all its stages, even in philosophic and ritualistic supplications, a certain urgency and fervour.

Summarizing, now, the conclusions reached in this chapter, we remark that a definition of prayer must form the basis of all further examination of its anthropological and psychological significance. Prayer, defined broadly, involves certain ideas of the Divine—viz., real existence, superiority, personality, and responsiveness. Further, it is the central act of religion, and, as such, is universal and social, and may be treated of in terms of psychology. Finally, it manifests close relationship to the subliminal processes of the mind.

The ground is now clear for an investigation into the origin and evolution of prayer, which will, in its turn, be introductory to a study of the psychology and philosophy of that religious act.

* “Das Gebet,” p. 491: “Prayer, then, is a living intercourse of devout man with a God he conceives as personal and feels to be present, an intercourse which reflects the forms of human social relationships.”

CHAPTER II

ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF PRAYER IN THE RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS

THE examination of the evidence relating to the origin and evolution of prayer will be best introduced by the preliminary enquiry, What is meant by the religious consciousness? Has man some special faculty by which he apprehends the Divine, a faculty or capacity which is exercised only in the realm of religious thought and feeling?

I. It is of importance to the psychological studies in this essay to state that we regard the religious consciousness as being simply the human consciousness exercised about the religious relationship. For reasons which will be given in a later chapter, the popular belief in a specific "religious instinct" is rejected, and stress is laid on the manifest normality of religious thought in general. The same mental processes operate in both religious and secular thought. The essential difference lies, not in the method, but in the material of thought.

The resolution of the mental life into the factors of feeling, reason, and volition, elaborated by Kant, is probably still the most convenient, and careful consideration of the respective importance of these elements is necessary in any study of the religious consciousness. Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Lotze each emphasized one important aspect—viz., will, reason, feeling, and the personality which unites and harmonizes them all respectively. In any state of consciousness, however, the conative, the cognitive, and the affective elements are all present, and none can be completely isolated from the others. They are divisible, but not divided. Accord-

ingly, as any one factor predominates in religion, we have a definite religious type, susceptible of psychological classification.

Of religion generally, it may be said that the affective element predominates. In its lowest, and in some of its highest, forms religion contains an excess of emotionalism, wherein strong emotions common to the savage and civilized man find ready expression. Savage madness induced by intoxicants, the Dionysian rites, the rise of Montanism in the second century of the Christian era, and certain types of modern revivals, are all examples of the predominance of feeling. This element is naturally more conspicuous in primitive cults, and earlier prayers are therefore naïve and unrestrained. Primitive prayers, indeed, are largely spontaneous responses evoked by abnormal happenings in the external world. The mystic of the more advanced religion has a transcendental consciousness—a sense of immediate communion with, or absorption into, God, and here, again, the predominating element is the affective.

The soul which feels itself detached from the world and in immediate contact with the Divine is suffused by peculiarly strong emotion, which, in its most intense form, elevates it in a bliss of ecstacy, timeless and free from the limitations and restraints of mundane existence. This state of mind has, obviously, real affinities with that of the savage, whose emotional, spontaneous, and free cries express the crudest utilitarian desires, and are often associated with the quaintest realistic representations of his deity.

A philosophical basis for the religion of feeling was attempted by Schleiermacher, for whom feeling is the source and root of religion. All religious concepts are deduced from reflection on the states of immediate feeling. By means of meditation and self-contemplation the soul enters into union with the Divine, and this union,

which can be effected by neither intellect nor will, is the essence of religion. This immediate feeling reveals the individual as absolutely dependent on the Divine, and is itself the individual's consciousness of God.

In reply to Schleiermacher's position, it may be urged that, apart from an active volitional element, the feeling of dependence, being purely negative, would have no religious value, and, in addition, belief in a power upon whom we can so depend demands the presence of a definite cognitive element in consciousness. On the other hand, piety may be intellectual or practical, according as reason or will predominates in the mental life. Accordingly, in the evolution of the religious consciousness, the rational and volitional elements develop from their originally subordinate place in the consciousness, and the affective element becomes less predominant.

Feeling has been well described as the passive echo in consciousness of the unconscious psychical processes. It reflects ideas and ideals, and is itself determined by that of which it is the reflection. It is passive and non-creative, and can never constitute the sole basis of religion.*

In regard to prayer, the central act of religion, there is abundant data to illustrate the pre-eminence of the emotional in the less advanced religions and cults. Prayer keeps pace with the evolution of religion, of which it is the articulation, showing that the rational element in the worship of man cannot well assume a prominence, and certainly not a predominance, until the exigencies of primitive life become so tempered as to allow man time for reflection. "The owl of Minerva does not start upon its flight till the evening twilight has begun to fall."†

2. Our use of the word "evolution" involves a tacit assumption which calls for notice. It implies the rejection of certain degeneration theories of human development,

* W. R. Inge, "Faith and its Psychology," p. 67.

† Hegel, quoted by Galloway, *op. cit.* p. 2.

and the acceptance of evolutionary progression in relation to the highest forms of culture. The degeneration theory, in its extreme form, postulates that man has descended from an originally high estate in which, coupled with purity and goodness, was superiority of intellect in comparison with present-day attainment. This is not infrequently based upon the dogmatic theory of man's fall from pristine excellence. It may be noted, however, that acceptance of the doctrine of a moral fall by no means excludes the possibility of a subsequent growth in spirit and intelligence, any more than it need be held to imply that the state from which man fell was that of absolute moral perfection. It is at least conceivable that man fell to rise again, and that the clearly evident progress made within the comparatively narrow limits of recorded history is his slow and stumbling climb back to a standard of comparative excellence.

The evolutionary hypothesis, thus stated, and the doctrine of a primal moral reverse are not ultimately and mutually exclusive. The great difficulty confronting those who would reconcile the two is the absence of adequate data for the establishment of the degeneration theory. All the known and established facts are explicable by the progression theory, and there is simply no need to assume a primary revelation as of such a character as to stamp all the marks of imperfection in the human race as signs of decadence. Progress, industrial, political, intellectual, and moral, is the outcome of humanity's long struggle, and it must be admitted that the general tenor of what evidence we have indicates that civilization means not only advance in wisdom and capability but also in moral standards.*

Anyone approaching the study of religion from the anthropological standpoint, unbiassed by theological presumptions, would accept "the beautifully simple theory"—as it has been ironically called—of religious evolution

* Tylor, "Primitive Culture," i. p. 31.

from the non-moral and the non-religious. Tylor may be said to have established his thesis "that the savage state in some measure represents an early condition of mankind out of which the higher culture has gradually been developed or evolved by processes still in regular operation as of old, the result showing that on the whole progress has far prevailed over relapse."* We regard the theory that man was created physically and morally perfect as untenable, but the claim of the fact of a primitive revelation is not necessarily bound up with such a theory. Thus, we find Jevons† reasoning for an immediate contact of God and man in primitive religious experience, and Rudolph Otto‡ arguing for the existence of a "specific non-rational religious apprehension," by which the transcendental is conceived by man in terms appropriate to his culture. Man's earliest apprehension of the Divine may well be called a revelation, and his subsequent development and advance a maturing of that capacity for fellowship with his God. This, at least, is in harmony with what we know of the psychology of religious development, and in view of the scantiness of historical data, the psychological approach to the problem is much more likely to yield satisfactory results than is the anthropological method.

Much evidence is now being accumulated by the Elliott-Smith and Rivers school (of which W. J. Perry is the chief living representative) in favour of the thesis that culture originally spread from an "archaic civilization" centred in Egypt, and that in process of diffusion it has been lost in many parts. As the bearers of this civilization dispersed they civilized, more or less successfully, the native population where they settled. According to Perry, much more caution is needed in the attribution of primitiveness to

* Tylor, "Primitive Culture," i. p. 32.

† "Introduction to the History of Religion."

‡ "Idea of the Holy."

peoples than the evolutionary school exercises. "While it is certain that civilization has developed, it is equally certain that no community can be taken as a type of an elementary or primitive stage of culture except when it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that its history lends support to such an assumption."* It remains to be seen to what extent this theory of culture-sequence will be accepted by anthropologists in general. As it stands at present it commends itself as being a harmonization of the evolutionary theory of cultural development and that of degeneration from an original state of civilization, for on this view the "archaic civilization" develops in its own locality and subsequently deteriorates.

3. Now we find that the question of the origin and evolution of prayer in the religious consciousness is bound up indissolubly with that of its connection with spell; in general, with the problem of the relation between magic and religion. As both religion and magic are characteristic of man's approach to his deity, three general theories of origin are possible, according as priority is attributed to prayer, to spell, or a common origin to both. In point of fact, all three theories have modern support.

The etymology of the word "magic" is illustrative of the early association between religion and magic. It is traceable to the Greek *mageia*, and the Latin *magus*, and ultimately to the old Persian *magu*, which term applied inclusively to the religion and the necromancy of the Zoroastrian priests—i.e., to the Magi. Magic, as the foreign occult practices came to be called in the West, was therefore a part of the religious practice of the East.

The most notable attempt to attribute the origin of religion to the decadence of magic was that of J. G. Frazer in the second edition of his great work, "The Golden Bough." In that volume occurs the decisive statement that in the evolution of thought magic, as repre-

* "Children of the Sun," p. 469.

senting a lower intellectual stratum, has probably everywhere preceded religion. He regards all magic as essentially founded on the conception of similarity or sympathy between things. He divides "sympathetic magic" into the two branches "homeopathic" and "contagious." The former derived its power from imitation, such as the injury of an enemy by the ill-treating of his image. Thus, for Frazer, magic is chronologically prior to religion; as man came to see the fallibility of his magical practices, he began to worship the supramundane powers, and to replace coercion by placation and supplication.

Modern support is given to Frazer's theory. We may instance Schrader, who claims that among the Aryans magic, as a method of approach to the supernatural, was prior to sacrifice and prayer. For Schrader, magic, by which man imagines that he is able by word or by deed to make a spirit directly and immediately serviceable to himself, precedes the true sacrifice and prayer, by which the otherwise free will of a deity is supposed to be more indirectly influenced and made favourable to mortal man.*

This theory of the origin of prayer has been subjected to strong criticism. Its weaknesses are apparent. Only by a judicious selection of data can it be maintained that religion invariably owes its origin to the discovered fallibility of magic. In the light of all that anthropological research has brought to us from the dim obscurity of primitive relationships with the spirit-world, it is probably as easy to prove the derivation of magic from religion and spell from prayer as it is the reverse. But we are not wholly dependent upon the data furnished by anthropology. Primitive processes are repeated in the era of civilization, and a study of childhood's reaction to external influences is more illuminating and gives much more fruitful results. It is becoming increasingly manifest that

* O. Schrader, "Encyclopedia Religion and Ethics," i., art. "Aryan."

anthropological theories relating to the beginning of human history must be tested by psychology and supplemented by psychological research. "The consciousness of the child reproduces the consciousness of the community to which he belongs—the common consciousness which existed before him, and will continue to exist after him."*

This dual method of approach to the subject of origins drives us to the belief that magic and religion are of the same generic type, each evolving out of a common vague awe in the presence of superhuman powers. Thus, R. R. Marett takes strong exception to certain elements in Frazer's theory of magic. He is unable to accept the clear-cut distinction between magic and religion found in "The Golden Bough," and in the development of his theory of pre-animistic religion proceeds to show that prayer can be, and is, an actual development from spell. This development has as its root the conception of mana. The magician exerts mana in the projection of his will, and seeks for supernatural aid to strengthen him, for reinforcement "from the boundless store of self-same mana belonging to those magicians of a higher order who, so to speak, he has created after his own image." Another line of development, according to Marett, lies in the personification of the magical instrument in which mana is conceived as becoming resident, and to which, in consequence of the personification, prayer is addressed. This, however, is not regarded as the complete story of the genesis of religious conceptions. It is a line of development, one out of many, and is itself crossed and recrossed by diverse lines of advance and retrogression.

As Marett confesses in relation to his mana-theory—"All this . . . is easier to deduce than to verify." Primitive data are so complex that one must of necessity approach the subject armed with a working theory of the

* F. B. Jevons, "Idea of God," p. 2.

constitution of the human mind. Theories deduced from the facts furnished by modern psychology must be applied to the phenomena of primitive customs, and, in any case, there must be a selection of types. None the less, the author of "The Threshold of Religion" has given substantial proof of the possibility of the evolution of prayer from spell, while, at the same time, he does not deny the corresponding possibility of the degeneration of prayer into spell. For him the basis of the historical genesis of religion must be sought in the awe evoked by the perception of the supernatural. The bounds of primitive religion coincide with those of primitive supernaturalism. But he is insistent that the occult is not the only form of supernatural manifestation known to primitive man.

We agree that there is a specific identity of nature common to the force which animates the magical act as such, and that additional power which in certain cases is sought from "external supernatural sources." Both magic and religion—both spell and prayer—may be equally primitive and may be differentiated out of a common belief about the awful and the occult. Either form may make a contribution to the development of the other, but apart from an already existing tendency and attitude of mind, neither can be said to be the sole and sufficient origin of the other. Magic is certainly not the sole origin of religion. What does seem established is that, in despair at the continued impotency of the spell, man developed another attitude towards the supernormal, another attitude *already familiar to him*—that of worship and supplication.

There are shadings off from the coercive into the placatory attitude, and it is not always easy to determine in which category the rude speech of uncivilized man can be placed, nor are we materially helped in the solution of this problem by any demarcating facts relating to the attribution of personality to the object of worship or

coercion. We regard it as a weakness in Dr. Marett's theory that he lays so much stress upon personification as the link between the magical and the religious. We noted in the previous chapter that true prayer cannot arise apart from some conception—it may be vague—of the personality of the object of address. It is not reducing the force of that stipulation to admit the obvious fact that primitive man has at the best but a hazy notion of personality. Crude anthropomorphism is inevitable at this stage, and the mana exercised by the supernatural is not more personal than the worshipper. Early prayer is, therefore, accompanied by only a vague attribution of personality to the object of worship. On the other hand, Dr. Marett's solution of the problem of the evolution of prayer from spell along the line of personification and deification is too easy. The ascription of personality to the magical instrument does not by any means invariably prove the death of magic and the birth of religion. The personal forms of address quoted by Marett* as illustrative of the transition do not suggest at all strongly the notion of deity. The mood is imperative, not optative. Command is not prayer. It is the negation of prayer and the hall-mark of magic. Take the Russian example he culls from "The Golden Bough":

"I attach five knots to each hostile infidel shooter. . . . Do ye, O knots, bar the shooter from every road and way . . . in my knots lies hid the mighty strength of snakes—from the twelve-headed snakes."

Now what does such an example prove or illustrate? Is this personification? Surely the Russian's pride in the potency of his knots need be nothing more than an unreligious magnifying of its magic. Nor does the vocative form prove much of value to Marett's argument. It does not, of necessity, imply personification and deification of the instrument. It can be proved that although, on the

* "Threshold of Religion," p. 73 ff.

one hand, real prayer involves personification of the deity in greater or less degree, on the other hand, magic does not eliminate personification, and need become none the less magical because of such a personal element.

"I suggest," says William McDougall, "that the fundamental distinction between religious and magical practices is not, as is sometimes said, that religion conceives the powers it envisages as personal powers, while magic conceives them as impersonal, but rather that the religious attitude is always that of submission, the magical attitude that of self-assertion, and that the forces which both magical and religious practices are concerned to influence may be conceived in either case as personal or impersonal powers. Hence the savage, who at one time bows down before his fetish in supplication, or at another seeks to compel its assistance by threats or spells, adopts towards the one object alternatively the religious and the magical attitude. Some fundamental difference of attitude and emotion distinguishes religion from science, into which magic becomes transformed as civilization progresses."*

4. Referring the fruits of this general discussion to the question of the genesis of prayer, we note that the fact of prayer, as also that of spell, is based on the essential psychic constitution of man, and is his necessary and developing reaction to the universe. We postulate that man's first reaction took the form of a vague yet potent awe, a distinct, ill-defined, and unsystematized reaction to the vague greatness about him. It is in this pre-animistic condition that we must look for the germs of all the subsequent magico-religious developments. Supernaturalism is prior to animism—*i.e.*, the consciousness of the awful is the psychologically necessary antecedent to any systematized attribution of soul or spirit to that which evokes awe. There must be a condition of mind prior

* "Introduction Social Psychology," p. 306. Also Galloway, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

to that in which exists a definite conception of the animistic nature of the external world, and this condition can only be described in such terms as supernaturalism, animatism (Marett), or instinctive apprehension of the surrounding "theoplasm" (M. Hartland).

Once prayer has evolved, it shares the vicissitudes of all religious development; it reaches in the higher religions a lofty height of spirituality and purity, and sinks again to a low level in some institutional forms, where the beggarly elements of magic are clearly discernible in the stress laid upon precision of form and time. It can be found in all possible forms and shades in the cults and religions of the present day, and no phase of religious experience reflects so clearly the varied conceptions of the nature of the religious relationship. In monotheism, and the shifting phantasmagoria of polytheism; in dualism and pantheism; in incarnations in flesh and stone; in paganism, as in the more refined religions—in all and every form of religion prayer is the articulation of the spirit, the words that "half reveal and half conceal the Soul within."

There is, we believe, evidence of the survival of the fittest in religion, as witness those barbaric peoples amongst whom, Tylor says, "animism has its distinct and consistent outcome, and polytheism its distinct and consistent completion in the doctrine of a supreme deity."

"Through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the
suns."

While religions decay, religion remains, ever growing outward and upward, to the pure and eternal. The Greek, the Roman, the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Teutonic, the Celtic, the Egyptian, the Mexican, and the Peruvian religions are no more. Even Zoroastrianism, lofty as it was, is all but extinct, and so the inevitable march of evolution goes on. All forms of religion leave their mark,

and prayer is the mark *par excellence*. From "the poor Indian whose native mind sees God in clouds or hears Him in the wind" (Pope); through the Æschylean invocation of "The pure Apollo . . . heaven's fugitive, who knows this human lot, and can forgive"; on still further through the high conception of Horace's "Hymn to Jupiter"—"Awful who reigns o'er the gods and men supreme; who sea and earth this universal globe with grateful change of seasons guides; from whom no being of superior power, nothing of equal second glory springs"—on to the supreme conception, that of the Holy One, whose claim to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" has left the mark of its vindication in the life of all classes and peoples, the march goes on. Not one of the stepping-stones of religious progress is without its value, and all the many efforts of prayerful man to establish contact with God are worthy of reverent and profound study.

Perhaps of no specific instance of primitive address to the supernatural can we say, Here exclusively is prayer, or, Here is magic without religion. Some well-developed Christian rites have a strong tinge of the magical, and there is often a loftiness about the religious utterances of primitive worshippers which surprises their modern successors.

The evolution of prayer, as also that of religion, is related to the growth of the idea of God. Prayer reflects the nature of that growth very clearly, and from that standpoint alone the examination of the recorded prayers of mankind is of value. The next stage in our treatment of prayer will therefore take the form of an endeavour to trace the general lines of development in prayer. Meanwhile, our study of the origin and evolution of prayer has brought us to see that the solution to the problem of origins does not lie in any theory which gives causative priority to spell. Man prays, not because his spells have

failed him, but because the higher conception of his relationship with the deity has never been wholly obscured by his dabblings in the occult. "Spell is not degraded prayer, nor is prayer a superior form of spell; neither does become nor can become the other, though men may oscillate with great rapidity between the two, and for long may continue so to oscillate. The two moods were from the beginning different, though man for long did not clearly discriminate between the two. The dispersive force of evolution, however, tends to spread them more and more widely until eventually oscillation ceases, if it does not become impossible."*

* F. B. Jevons, "Idea of God," p. 125.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRAYER

PRAYER is, as we have seen, an indication of the character of the religious idea it expresses. In that act is expressed invariably, though not always consciously or purposely, man's idea of God and his idea of the relationship in which he stands to the object of his worship. Hence, as religion develops, so will prayer evolve from the crude to the cultured, from the naïve to the reasoned. To put the same fact in another way, the progressive development of man's religious utterances is the invariable accompaniment of, and the clear revelation of, the development of his religious ideas and beliefs. The story of the evolution of prayer is, therefore, that of man's rise from an inarticulate instinctive reaction to the powers around him to the higher conception of a divine absolute, to whom the attribution of human qualities can be only relatively valid.

Religion and magic begin to emerge as distinct attitudes to the mysterious when the human mind has developed sufficiently to make the first crude attempt at intercourse with that which both frightens and inspires man. The primitive awe is evoked by the mystery of the external world—"the Unknown Without." Animism proper begins when the savage attributes to the Awful not only will and a measure of personality but also soul or spirit. As that conception of the supernatural develops through gross anthropomorphism—which arises when form as well as soul is attributed to the supernatural—to more exalted ideas of the deity, so religion develops, and prayer reflects that development.

The key to the transition from the general mana-belief

of supernaturalism to animism and spiritism is found in the idea of the "bound soul." Within the buzzing confusion of the primitive consciousness there evolves through long processes something approaching the conception of personality. In his dreams the savage visits friends, fights enemies, hunts animals, and meets comrades long dead. His soul, therefore, *has* left him while he was asleep, and *is*, therefore, detachable from his body. From this it is not a far cry to the belief that all animated beings are possessed of spirits who inhabit them for a time. Thus, the Australian believes that the *yambo*, the *murup*, or the *boolabong*, leaves the body and returns to it. Professor Carpenter quotes an instance related by Mr. Howitt with reference to the Kurnai (of Gippsland), who "asked one of the Kurnai whether he really thought his *yambo* could go out during sleep." "It must be so," was the answer, "for when I sleep I go to distant places, I see distant people, I even see and speak with those that are dead."*

From the wealth of data relating to prayer can be differentiated three stages of development. There is, first of all, the prayer of primitive man, which is simple and eudæmonistic, intermittent, and spontaneous. At this stage prayer is invariably a social act. The worshipper has no idea of God that is not bound up with tribal customs and sanctions. The second stage is found in regular and ritualistic prayer. Institutional worship has now become a settled feature of the corporate life, and worship tends to harden into stereotyped forms. Religion, generally speaking, has now passed from the tribe and the clan to the nation or tribe-group. The rise of the priesthood, discernible in the earlier stage, has now become a marked feature, and the power of the religious leaders increased accordingly. From this stage (which contains many diverse and bifurcating lines of progress and retrogression) run those lines of development which lead to the highest

* "Comparative Religion," p. 86.

stage of all—that associated with individualistic or universal religion, where the confines of tribe and nation are over-stepped, and the conception of the religious relationship is reached in which God is the God of the whole earth and His concern is primarily with the spiritual welfare of the individual soul, and only secondarily with the social implications of communal life. Of individualistic prayer there are two leading types—the mystic and the prophetic—the prayers of the “mystic way” and those reflecting the relationship between the power and majesty of God and the needs of humanity.

The prayers of mankind might also be classified according to either (a) the quality of the aspirations as revealed in the nature of the gifts desired, whether material or spiritual, selfish or altruistic, or (b) the nature of the gods, or God, addressed. These lines of development, however, can only be separated in thought from the growth of religion through tribal to universal, and in tracing this growth we shall also be marking out the above lines of progress.

In view of the fact that prayer is essentially a social phenomenon, it is interesting to note that sociologically there is good ground for the division of its stages of growth into tribal, national, and universal. The late Professor L. T. Hobhouse states three forces as the leading principles of social union:

(A) The principle of *Kinship*, in which the blood-tie is the all-important factor;

(B) The principle of *Authority* or Despotism, of Force and Authority, and

(C) The principle of *Citizenship*, under which are recognized the personal rights of the individual, and the necessity for all to safeguard the common good.

These three social forces are manifestly those controlling development of religion through the successive stages sketched out above.

1. *Tribal Prayer*.—In regard to primitive prayer, the analogy of child-life is of greatest assistance. Individual growth repeats the main stages of racial development. Expressed biologically, phylogenetic processes are repeated in the ontogenetic. For the child as for the savage, the consciousness of self is the result of growth. It is relatively late, and we therefore find that in the early stages of primitive religion, when the consciousness of self has not been realized to any appreciable extent, the distinction between the individual will and that of the community is unrecognized. Religion in general, and prayer in particular, is all but bare of the individual element, and is essentially a social act.

The social factor plays a great part in determining the development of the self-consciousness, and thereby, so to speak, fashions a weapon against itself, for the growth of the individual consciousness leads to conflict between the desires of the unit and those of the tribe, and the social bond is weakened. More or less surreptitiously, methods of trafficking with the Unseen are adopted by those members of the tribe whose religious interests clash with those of the community. The origin of fetishism may be traced to this revolt of the individual against tribal custom. Fetishism is generally anti-social, and constitutes a measure of advance in primitive religion. It can only arise when self-consciousness is more or less definite, and for this reason the theory that fetishism is the original root out of which all other forms of religion have sprung must be rejected. References are given in the footnote to other reasons advanced for the rejection of the fetish-theory.*

The phenomenon of language throws great light on the evolution of prayer, emphasizing as it does the rela-

* *Vide* J. B. Pratt, "Psychology Religious Belief," p. 50; A. Menzies, "History of Religion," p. 38; Galloway, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 94.

tionship of man to the life of the society. Language is essentially a product of social intercourse, and can only develop together with the thought it expresses; and thought, in its turn, can only advance with the aid of the concept-fixing function of speech. It is probable that the beginnings of human speech were cries which evoked a sympathetic response, and that in the course of evolutionary progress the human became distinguishable from the sub-human. As far back as the third century B.C. Epicurus found the origin of language in instinctive and emotional cries as reflexive as a sneeze or the bark of a dog. There does not seem much reason to modify the Epicurean theory. In different tribes these cries would vary according to differing conditions, and from such roots language evolved as sounds became fixed, and its growth would be greatly stimulated by imitation, repetition, and developed auditive perception. Thus, for Professor Stout, language as a system of articulate sounds originates in "a simple association by contiguity between an 'articulation-sound complex' and a percept."*

Referring this to the problem of the origin and evolution of prayer, it seems to the present writer that Professor Galloway is far too conservative in his notes on the evolution of language.† He says: "A considerable progress in the use of language must have taken place ere the existence of religious ideas became possible . . . we can only speak of religion where there is the idea of a relation to higher powers and the conception of such a permanent relation is made possible by language." Why *considerable progress*? It is at least conceivable that there would be a fixed, habituated, and reflexive articulation in response to the abnormal in nature, which need not be as Galloway seems here tacitly to assume, evoked merely by terror; and, further, that such responses would be definitely religious long before anything worthy of the name

* "Analytical Psychology," ii. p. 190.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

of language evolved. Religious feeling is genuine long before thought and speech can articulate it. The "awe" of which Marett speaks, and the idea of the "numinous" spoken of by Otto, belong to that elemental feeling-continuum to which may be traced all the differentiations of the conscious life in which, we claim, prayer may be present as "a hidden fire that trembles in the breast"—an instinctive, perhaps largely self-defensive, orientation of the soul to the great forces which seem to dominate the world.

There is a danger of reading into primitive mentality what is true of the later stages of development. Granted that the mind of primitive man was not capable of ideal representations and of trains of ideas, it by no means follows that the earliest articulations were devoid of psychical function. If the question is examined psychologically it resolves itself into this: Can the mind of man entertain a perceptive mental image in relation to the world around him before a considerable development in language—a mental state of such a character as to possess a definitely religious colouring? Is the association between name and thing, which is only possible when the mind is capable of ideal representations, necessary to that simple awareness of the Divine which we have called religious awe, worshipful apprehension? When the problem is thus stated the answer is clearly in the negative in regard to the latter question.

Professor Galloway admits the priority of terror. Suppose we substitute awe for terror, need we then wait for considerable development in language before the elements of a religious relationship are discernible? We think not, and on psychological grounds, on the analogy of child-life, would postulate that the reflexive cries of earliest man, uttered before any system of speech worthy of the dignified name of language came into existence, would have so deep a tinge of religious colouring as to demand

a place in any comprehensive study of prayer. We might go further, and still be within the limits of our broad definition of prayer. Apart altogether from articulate sounds, the primitive response to the abnormal might well have been expressed in gesture-language. Pantomimic prayer is certainly a feature of savage cults, and gestures form a significant part of much modern ritual. The deportment of the body and hands has always played an important part in worship; for example, kneeling, standing, prostrating oneself, bowing, clapping, and beating the breast. These are the almost invariable and universal accompaniments of prayer. Some philologists maintain that all primary words were mimetic, or, rather, onomatopœic. Things were named by the exact reproduction of the sound associated with them. However that may be, there is adequate ground for assuming that prayer preceded the appearance of ordered and systematized speech, and that it originates in a primitive awe in the presence of the unusual and abnormal.

Tribal worship is essentially social, and language is a social phenomenon. Language serves not only as an instrument of conceptual thinking, it is also the medium of social intercourse. The social factor in language ensures that the thought-processes of the individual are organized correspondingly to those processes already common in society, while the existence of society and its consequent claims upon the individual stimulates thought and exercises that incentive by means of language. Society could not exist without intercourse, and social intercourse is made possible by speech, which in turn owes its origin and development to the need for interchange of thought. Man can only be *en rapport* with his social environment by possessing himself of the ideas current in it.

Using, again, the helpful analogy of the mental life of the child, we are able to trace the individualistic tendencies in early religion which manifest themselves as self-

consciousness develops. The child slowly learns to distinguish self and not-self. In this growth of consciousness he is assisted by the movements of his body. The parts of the body seem at times to be part of himself, and sometimes external to himself and part of the external world. Even when the not-self begins to be recognized as such its leading features are only gradually distinguished. Smiles, cries, etc., excite in the child purely instinctive reactions, but in course of time he understands the expressions of others in terms of his own experience. By imitation and acting he learns more of the emotions of others, and comes to recognize a system of relations between himself and others. No doubt the child gets his idea of self, to a great extent, by accepting the ideas of himself that he finds expressed by those around him. He finds himself condemned or approved, and so moulds his self-consciousness by that reflection of himself.*

The discussion of the social and individual factors in primitive religion cannot be concluded without some reference to the subject of totemism—that battle-ground of the anthropologists. Totemism marks the inability of the primitive mind to comprehend and worship a pure ideal apart from some material embodiment and envisagement. The totem is the material embodiment of the unity and solidarity of the religious community. “A totem is a class of material objects which a savage regards with superstitious respect, believing that there exists between him and every member of the class an intimate and altogether unique relation.”†

The origin of totem-worship is, and has been for long, a matter of dispute. The leading theories are those of Frazer, who sees in it a primitive expansion of conception and child-birth; Lang, who finds its origin in the signifi-

* See, for further note on the development of the self-consciousness, appendix to this chapter.

† Frazer, “Golden Bough,” i. p. 8.

cance of tribal names imposed from without; Haddon, who associates it with the local food supply; Durkheim, who interprets totemism as the worship of an anonymous, impersonal, immanent god—*i.e.*, Mana under a particular sensible form. The last-named seems nearest the solution. Totemism does rest on a community of nature between man and animals or plants, and at the root of that belief is the respect felt for certain qualities possessed by animals, or the sense of dependence on certain plants for sustenance, from which animals or plants the totem-tribe believes itself to be descended.

Totem-worship is brought within the province of this essay by the fact that it represents a certain phase of religious thought, and constitutes one of the many ways by which uncivilized man seeks to approach his god and give visible form to the relationship he believes to exist between that god and himself. It has also a definitely social character, and by strict rules of exogamy fosters and develops the clan. While not a religion, in the strict sense—for the totem is not superior to, but on an equality with, the members of the totem-clan—yet totemism is definitely religious. The sacramental eating of the totem is regarded as bringing the power of the god within the worshippers.*

Religious development is indicated in prayer by the quality of the desires expressed and by the nature of the deity addressed. At the lower level of religion which we

* On the question of the religious character of totemism there is divergence of opinion. E. P. Hartland says ("Encyclopedia Religion and Ethics," xii. p. 407a): "Although regarded with reverence and looked to for help, the totem is never, when totemism is not decadent, prayed to as a god or a person with powers which we call supernatural." On the other hand, H. M. Gwatkin ("Kingdom of God," i. p. 271) calls it "a low religion, which left some of the most elementary ideas undeveloped. It was not even a definite monotheism or a definite polytheism, but held both systems in solution."

are considering, prayer is predominantly unethical, and the petitions are those related to personal or communal advantage. The breadth and depth characteristic of the prayers of the great individualistic religions are unknown to the savage. Yet it must never be assumed either that savage prayer is purely selfish or that civilized prayer is purely altruistic. Students of the history of religion know well enough that the evolution of religion is dispersive. It follows no single line of development, and in its highest stages are found elements which prove that side by side with the growth of religion from tribal to universal there have developed entirely unethical and magical theories and practices. The following examples are given, therefore, not because their sentiment is peculiar to undeveloped religion, but because it is predominantly characteristic of the earlier period. They are taken from Tylor's "Primitive Culture."

The following example illustrates well the spontaneous and informal character of early prayer :

"When a Zulu sneezes, and is thus for the moment in close relation to the divine spirits, it is enough for him to mention what he wants, and thus the words, 'a cow,' 'children,' are prayers. Fuller forms are such as these: 'People of our house. Cattle. People of our house. Good luck and health. People of our house. Children.'"

The principle of *Do ut des* is illustrated in the following prayer :

"Here is ava for you, O gods. Look kindly towards this family; let it prosper and increase, and let us all be kept in health. . . . Here is ava for you, O sailing gods. Do not come ashore at this place, but be pleased to depart along the ocean to some other land."

As illustrative of the social character of savage worship, and as marking the rise of the priesthood which characterizes the transition from tribal to national religion, the following example serves :

“When the Manganja of Lake Nyasa were offering to the supreme deity a basket full of native meal and a pot of native beer that he might give them rain, the priestess dropped the meal handful by handful on the ground, each time calling in a high-pitched voice, ‘Hear thou, O god, and send rain,’ and the assembled people responded, clapping their hands softly and intoning (they always intone their prayers), ‘Hear thou, O god.’”

The transition from primitive to the later stages of religious development cannot be studied apart from some reference to the evolution of the supreme god. Among savage people are found supreme beings, the embodiment of knowledge, wisdom, and goodness—the “high gods,” of which Mr. Andrew Lang writes, they “exist together with all the various forms of animism and spiritism and supernaturalism.” It is impossible to be dogmatic about the origin of these high gods. Dr. Menzies finds in the conception marks of a later development. Many of these supreme gods are nature-gods, who have outgrown the other deities of that class and come to occupy an isolated position. The subject bristles with difficulty. Exceptions are ready to hand to modify all the leading theories. There can be no doubt, however, that man has from the beginning been seeking for a personal power superior to himself and worthy of his sole devotion. This search has led him into various forms of religion—into fetishism, polytheism, polydæmonism, and, finally, monotheism. Through all these man has been approximating to the conception of a personal relationship with the one God, and has made articulate in prayer, both early and advanced, his search after Him. It is, therefore, not surprising that the earliest recorded prayers give evidence of the selective tendency of human worship.

2. *National Prayer*.—The prayers of what has been called national religion are marked by *regularity and ritualism*. The spasmodic and intermittent prayers of

the savage are replaced by religious exercises organized on a national basis, the word "national" being used to signify a larger community than a tribe or clan, a community which may, or may not, constitute a nation in the general sense of the word.

The gods of this stage of religious evolution are more clearly defined, individualized, and exalted. As tribes became fused, and the elements of tribal loyalty broadened under the influence of new federations, there naturally arose a multiplication of deities, and a polytheistic worship in which room is found for the tribal deities of the members of those federations. Polydæmonism gives place to polytheism, and in long process of time the inferior gods are no longer worshipped, and an integrating movement leads to the establishment of several great gods as national deities. The greater nature-gods of more primitive religion become purified and magnified, and absorb in the process some of the qualities of the lesser deities which do not themselves survive.

There is coincident with this growth a development in the ethical attributes of the objects worshipped. Generally speaking, political growth is accompanied by moral, and there is evidenced a tendency to relate the gods to the agricultural, administrative, militant, and religious departments of national life.

In addition, the idea of personality in relation to the Divine becomes more prominent. As soon as the attribution of personality enters more definitely into religious worship, mythology begins and narratives are related of the great deeds of the god-heroes. Mythology and polytheism are often complementary, and both presuppose a definite process of personification in man's worship.

The stage of religious progress which we are now considering is still marked by magical notions and practices. Of this there is abundant evidence in the importance attached to *the divine name*. In prayer, the name of the

god is an epithet—its origin is adjectival. In some cases great efficacy is attached to the constant repetition of the divine name, in others the name is so holy and so charged with mysterious potency that it is not uttered; it is enveloped in secrecy, and only the initiates are taught it.*

There are several main features which mark the development of prayer from tribal to national. There is—

(a) A movement from polydæmonism through polytheism, kathenotheism, and henotheism to monotheism. In Egypt, for instance, “a gradual and tentative approach was made to monotheism without attaining clear and unequivocal expression of it.” Osiris is “Lord of Eternity, King of the gods”; Horus, “the universal Lord”; Ptah, “the father of the father of the gods”; Amon Ra, “the one in his works single among the gods, their chief to whom they give honour, the creator, deliverer, and judge.”

The henotheism of the Vedic poets has received much notice from writers on Comparative Religion. The Vedic deities were classified according as they were gods of the earth, air, or sky. One god was made supreme over each section—Agni supreme god of earth, Indra or Vayu of air, and Surya of sky. Alternatively, the highest honours are paid to each of these gods. Each is described in epithets implying supremacy, but in the Vedic prayers and hymns there is the vaguely monotheistic conception of a divine unity in one supreme deity. Various names are applied to this being—Visvakarman Prajapata, Lord of creatures; Svayambha, the self-existent; Skambha, support; and, in the later literature, Brahma. In the Vedic

* “In all Hindoo sects the names of the deity are of much importance; Vishnu has a round thousand, Siva’s catalogue exceeds this by eight. Many of them are the commonplaces with which men of all tongues and creeds glorify God—All-seeing, All-knowing, All-powerful—or by which theologians define Him—infinite, self-existent, all-pervading, and the like.”—G. F. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

hymns this monotheistic tendency finds expression in such passages as this :

“They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and he is the celestial and well-informed Garutmat. Sages name variously that which is but one,” while in the Taittiriya Brahmana (3.12.3) we find : “Let us worship with oblations the first-born god, by whom the entire universe which exists is surrounded; the self-existent Brahma, who is the supreme austere father.”

There is probably no better illustration of the development of the prayerful idea of God in national religion than is found in these sacred books of India. They are penetrated with sacerdotal magic, and contain ritual which is nothing more than the recital of spells; but they demonstrate conclusively the progress towards monotheism, and contain spiritual and pure forms of prayer side by side with lower elements.

(b) Another leading feature of national religion is its advanced organization of communal worship. Perhaps the most prominent examples of systematized national religion are the cults of ancient Rome, China, Greece, and Judaism. In all these religious worship was an integral part of the national life. There was no separation between Church and State, and the smaller the State, the stronger was the bond of unity.

In ancient Rome religion was definitely an institution of the State. The gods illustrate well the process of absorption and amalgamation, already referred to as a feature of the growth of national religion. As city after city was conquered, so their cults were nationalized and perpetuated, and, in time, legalized. The whole Greek pantheon, including Apollo, Demeter, Dionysius, and Koré, was annexed by Rome.

In the days of the Empire, the great religious bond uniting all the peoples and religions was the worship of the Emperor, which included both that addressed to the

Divi Imperatores, each with his temple, priesthood, and public festivals, and that in honour of the living emperor. It was to Jupiter, however, that the chief honours were paid. He was Jupiter Olympus, Maximus, Victor Triumphator. In this Jupiter-worship there is evident a monotheistic tendency amid all the polytheistic confusion of the incorporated worships of conquered peoples.

Similarly, in China, public worship is a function of the State. The Emperor—the Son of Heaven—is the religious head of the empire, and on him alone rests the prerogative of worshipping those powers upon whom depends the empire's welfare. The Chinese worship heaven (Thian), the nature-spirits, and the spirits of their ancestors. At the ancestral sacrifices prayers are offered to the departed through the personators—*i.e.*, living descendants of the deceased, called “prayer-officers.” Heaven (Shang-Ti) to the Chinese is a personal and moral god addressed in prayer as, “O distant and azure heaven!” and, “O bright and high heaven, who enlightenest and rulest this low world.” Legge* quotes a prayer of the Emperor to Shang-Ti:

“Thou, O spiritual sovereign, camest forth in thy presidency and first didst divide the grosser parts from the purer. Thou madest heaven, thou madest earth, thou madest man.”

Here, clearly, in this national cult is monotheism in essence—a worship of one over-ruling, personal, intelligent, and moral power, but a worship not offered by the masses, who are for the most part content with ancestor-worship and the cult of the nature-spirits.

A further example of state religion is found in Judaism. The monotheism of the ancient Jews was of the loftiest, but was tempered with the lower elements of henotheism and spiritism. Jahweh was a national deity, and it is surmised†

* “Religions of China,” p. 30.

† Without adequate reason, in the writer's judgment.

that He was originally a nature-god associated with thunder, and dwelt on Mount Sinai. The existence of other gods was admitted, but they were usually far inferior to Jahweh. The Canaanite Baals were, to the Jew, real entities, whose images might be worshipped. The prophets, however, ushered in an ethical monotheism, and the other gods were proclaimed to be false and unreal.

The religion of Israel during the Monarchy was essentially national, and in the later stage, reflected in the Levitical writings, was minutely organized on a national basis. It was a theocracy during the commonwealth which existed from Moses to the Monarchy, and developed a ritual and worship which were conserved and established in the more settled days of the Kingdom. Of the national character of the worship of Israel, no more striking and impressive illustration could be furnished than the great festivals at Jerusalem.

So, also, early Greek religion is disintegrated and lacking in organization. It is purely local, but as the arts were enlisted in the service of religion, temples and statues became centres of worship. As the worship of Zeus, Apollo, and Athene rose in power and extent, so the Greeks were united in a new centrality of worship, and there arose the great Greek festivals such as the Olympian festival in honour of Zeus and that in honour of Apollo at Delphi.

(c) The rise of the priesthood in national religion is of special relevance to the subject of this essay. In all the great religions, powerful hereditary priesthoods grew up and gained influence and authority. To the priest was attributed special sanctity and power, and into his hand passed the religious prerogatives. In China, for example, the temple festivals are conducted by the Wu priests hired for the occasion, normally following ordinary occupations. So also the Buddhist priests in China, against whom the Government has from time to time legislated. In China,

also, the Taoist clergy are organized under a Pontiff, who is called "T'ien-Shi"—*i.e.*, "Heaven-master." Similarly, in Japan, the priests generally follow their ordinary avocations and don their distinctive dress only when engaged in religious ceremonies. In ancient Egypt, however, the temples were lavishly endowed by Rameses and his successors, and the high priest of Ammon maintained a body of troops and was a power to be respected.

In the religion of the Vedas, priests have to direct the conduct of the sacrifice to ensure that no errors are made. In later ritual, the Brahman becomes the officiating master of religious ceremonies. After the Vedic period, the Brahman priesthood becomes a caste, and wields enormous power.

In Zoroastrianism, where the exact performance of the rite is of highest importance, and where no mistake must be made in the exact repetition of the ancient text, the priesthood naturally becomes powerful and authoritative. Here the priest wields the power of magic as well as that of religion. There is a magical efficacy in the exactitude of the worship, which depends upon the priest. Much the same may be said of the Roman Flamines and the priests of the Sibylline oracles.

Priests abounded, of course, in primitive religion, but not until the rise of national religion may the hereditary and organized priesthood be said to evolve and a corresponding development traced in the ritualistic features of worship. The liturgical element in worship is prominent in the national cults, and in so far as prayer becomes enshrined in a national liturgy, it often tends to harden and to lose its spiritual tone. The ritual may survive long after its original meaning has been forgotten, and liturgies repeated by those who are ignorant of their original significance.

These, then, are the main features which characterize national religion so far as it is of importance for the study

of the evolution and development of prayer. Prayers directed to one supreme god mark the dawn of monotheism, which exists contemporarily with the grosser elements out of which it emerges. The national organization of religion in the form of State worship and the creation of priestly hierarchies synchronize with the growth of ritualistic prayer and elaborate ceremony.

3. *Universal Prayer.*—In passing, now, to the phenomena associated with the great universal or individualistic religions, we note that they are related to the earlier stages of religious development. The social advance peculiar to the national, as distinct from the tribal, stage prepared the way for the religious geniuses who saw beyond their time, and spoke to their age in terms of a unique religious experience. Religion for the seer is essentially individualistic. It is an intercourse between the solitary soul and its God, and it therefore oversteps all national and social barriers.

Returning for illustration to Israel, we see there men like Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea, who found in religion an inward and personal experience. God was the Lord of all the earth, and in opposition to the elaborations of the sacrificial system they stressed the necessity for the worship of a broken and a contrite spirit. In their writings religion becomes more spiritual and less ritualistic, more inward and less external, more individual and universal and less narrow and political.

In Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity, we see the rise of individualistic religion, founded on the immediate and personal experience of a great personality. Buddhism, however, in its suppression of the will to live, and its negative goal, Nirvana, loses that universality of appeal which it merits by its inwardness and the redemption proclaimed by Gautama. Islam was founded on the personal and real experience of the prophet, and bade fair to become the religion of the world. Its rapid growth,

however, was due in great measure to the principle of force, which is alien to the spirit of true religion, and is a lapse from the earlier lofty teaching of Mohammed. Hampered as it is by its sensualism and anthropomorphism, Islam has forfeited its claim to spiritual universality, and until it enriches its ideas of God and sheds its intolerance, it must remain local.

Christianity also shares, to some extent, a decadence from the ideals of its Founder, but it possesses powers of life and recovery not shared by the other two religions. In its pure form, it is essentially a personal religion, and worships a Being than whom no greater is conceivable. Its recognition of the social implications of the true gospel and its lofty and rigorous ethics distinguish it from its rivals to universality, while its emphasis on the inwardness of true religion is the source of its vitality and strength. The most fruitful years in the history of the Christian Church have been those in which she has returned from schism and persecution and political entanglement to the simple and sublime life and teaching of Christ. The closer she approximates to the vision of her Founder, the more effective is her appeal to mankind and the more truly universal Christianity becomes.

Thus in these three great instances is exemplified the rise of a religion which, to a greater or smaller extent, sees beyond the borders of the nation, and claims the whole world as its rightful sphere. Along this line of development we reach the acme and the goal of religious evolution. Religion becomes primarily and fundamentally an individual relationship, and only secondarily a social phenomenon.

So arise those outpourings of the soul which adorn the religious literature of all civilized peoples. Prayer becomes at once more personal and more intimate. The consciousness of a direct relationship as distinct from the communal relationship with the deity fosters a spontaneity

which is rare in institutional and highly organized religions. Individualism, of course, is present in every stage of religious growth, but in the earlier stages it is subsidiary to the communal and institutional forms. There has often arisen a cry from a religious spirit born out of due time, who sees beyond the horizon of his age and realizes a direct unmediated intercourse with his God. Although it is not until the birth of the great individualistic and universal religions referred to that there emerge the highest forms of prayer, there are many articulations of the religious spirit in earlier times which stand out in pleasing contrast to the level of contemporary religion. Consider, for instance, this lofty prayer of Nebuchadnezzar in the light of the polytheism and sorcery of Babylon:

“O Eternal Ruler, Lord of all being, grant that the name of the king Thou lovest, whose name Thou hast proclaimed, may flourish as seems pleasing to Thee. Lead him in the right way: I am the Prince that obeyest Thee, the creature of Thy hand. Thou hast created me and hast entrusted to me dominion over mankind. According to Thy mercy, O Lord, which Thou bestowest upon all, may Thy supreme rule be merciful! The worship of Thy divinity implant within my heart: grant me what seems good to Thee, for Thou art He that hast fashioned my life.”

Individualistic prayer at its highest is marked by selflessness. It recognizes the universality of the true religious order, and is no longer centred solely upon the individual and his own desires, or upon the nation and its communal interests. Man has realized that “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,” and that real and effective prayer can never be selfish or narrowly partisan. True religion is altruistic, and its universality is based upon its immediacy and its individuality. “Prayer is thus at

the end what it was at the beginning, the prayer of a community; but whereas at the beginning the community was the narrow and exclusive community of the family or tribe, at the end it is a community which may include all mankind.”*

It is making no assumption to say that the prayers of Christendom are richest in the realization of an immediate and personal relationship with the supernatural, for Christianity is essentially the religion of a personal Founder, and has always received its truest interpretation and its greatest impetus from those who, as individuals, have overstepped the religious conventionalities which so easily beset and incarcerate religion and have followed Christ at the expense of ostracism and unpopularity.

“It is here, in the simple personal following of Christ, that the strength of Christianity will always lie, not in the mazes of dogmatic theology, not in the spiritual machinery for drawing souls to God, not in the teaching of the churches, not in the pomp of ceremonial, not in the fervour of the preacher, not even in the enthusiasm of the mystic who dreams of his oneness with God—not in these does Christ live, but first in the few who live as He did, shedding the light of peace around them, and next in the wider circle of those who, dwelling on the borderline dim betwixt vice and virtue, or in the twilight of conventional ideas, are irradiated now and then by a gleam from the true meaning of words with which they have been all their lives familiar, and for a while see themselves as they are, and respond with some effort, however vain and short, towards the truth of things.”†

* Jevons, “Idea of God,” p. 149.

† Hobhouse, “Mind in Evolution,” p. 526.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

McDOUGALL ON SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

THE self-consciousness is closely related to social life and influence, and, as it develops, its relationship to its social environment is modified. McDougall distinguishes four stages in the growth of self-consciousness—

(1) The stage of instinctive behaviour, modified only by the influence of the pains and pleasures that are instantly experienced in the course of instinctive activities.

(2) The stage in which the operation of the instinctive impulse is modified by the influence of rewards and punishments, administered more or less systematically by the social environment.

(3) The stage in which conduct is controlled in the main by the anticipation of social praise and blame.

(4) The highest stage, in which conduct is regulated by an ideal of conduct that enables a man to act in the way that seems to him right, regardless of the praise or blame of his immediate social environment.

These stages in the development of self-consciousness correspond to the divisions of religious growth discussed in this chapter. Thus, stages (1) and (2) belong to tribal religion, in which the instinctive element is predominant and the social consciousness active and dominating; stage (3) belongs to national religion, which is essentially social and institutional; while stage (4) corresponds to individualistic religion, where the ideal of conduct is related to, but not wholly controlled by, the voice of society.

PART II

PSYCHOLOGICAL

CHAPTER IV

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONS PRESUPPOSED BY PRAYER

THE contents of this chapter will prove to be, for the most part, an elaboration of conclusions reached in the course of a discussion of the nature of prayer. It was postulated in Chapter I. that prayer necessitates a belief in the real and objective existence of the object of worship. Apart from the value-judgment presupposed in an attitude of prayer, that religious exercise would be an impossibility. For prayer involves a reference to the transcendent, a many-sided conviction of the real significance and value of the super-sensible—many-sided because the prayerful consciousness must accept more than the mere existence of its God. Secondly, therefore, that primary assurance is attended by the conviction of His accessibility and approachableness. The act of prayer is a postulation that God can and will hear and respond, that there is a way of approach to Him from the human level. Prayer, that is, presupposes a belief in the possibility of transcending the bounds of the human order. The spiritual, supernatural realm exists, and can be reached, and its relations with the sensible world modified by human address. So that, thirdly, prayer inevitably involves the faith-postulate of the possibility of communion and fellowship with God, an articulate intercourse and intimate association with Him.

Prayer, then, presupposes an attitude of belief or

credulity with reference to the spiritual realm, an orientation of the soul to a power able to assist. Our first consideration, therefore, will be an attempt at the psychological analysis of that mental attitude of belief. We shall then proceed to deal with the three main features of the content of the believing prayer-consciousness—viz., belief in the existence of an appropriate object of worship, belief in the religious accessibility of that being, and belief in the possibility of mutual communion between the human and the divine.

Generally speaking, the mental attitude of belief is composite, and is itself susceptible of analysis into its constituent factors. As in the religious consciousness as a whole, so in the specifically religious attitude of belief, there are three main psychic factors involved. To return to a problem already touched upon in our analysis of the religious consciousness, we seem driven by the facts of mental life to postulate these three dominant factors in belief—cognitive awareness of the object of worship, conative projection of unfulfilled aspirations and desires towards that object, and the emotional warmth inseparable from the genuine religious sentiment.

Probably the most elementary description of consciousness is that of simple awareness. This is the primary act of knowledge. Idealists, of course, would claim that the simple act of knowledge is that of thought-relation, and there can be no knowledge, however elementary, which does not presuppose and involve thought-relations. For the empiricist, sensation is the root and foundation of knowledge. Thought-relations, however, cannot be primary, since the data which they presuppose must be chronologically prior to them, and are furnished by the state of consciousness described as "awareness." Neither can sensation, as the empiricist uses the term, be more primary than this simple awareness, a present and immediate experience.

Now, in the most elementary state of consciousness known there are present the thought, feeling, and will elements of experience. The simplest apprehension is coloured by the volitional and emotional elements. What, then, is the significance of these elements for religious belief?

(A) Regarded from the cognitive aspect, the belief presupposed and sustained in the act of prayer has, as its essential constituent, an awareness of the object of devotion. The question of the real existence of this divine object is not a psychological one. Belief as a fact of human experience is true and is inexplicable apart from cognitive awareness. A creed must begin with, "I believe in . . .," and it views every relevant fact of experience as related to an objective reality possessing religious significance for the believer.

Religious belief, then, involves reference to a cognized external object. In its earliest infancy, primitive belief is not concerned to elaborate its awareness of the other-and-beyond, the supranormal, the Awful. It is a dim, vaguely defined awareness, and can involve little more than, "It exists, and is other than I." As the religious consciousness develops, and belief becomes more clearly defined, the cognitive element becomes less obscure, and feeling and conation less predominant. From the savage apprehension of the mysterious to the modern mystic's immediate intuition of the Infinite there operates an evolutionary progress of the mental and spiritual life, and its development is accompanied by modification of the constitutive factors of the religious consciousness. Belief in general, and the specifically religious belief in particular, throughout the whole of its development may be defined from the cognitive aspect as the apprehension of harmony between the elements of reality. It is the recognition of ordered connection and systematized relation between the elements of experience. In this respect

prayer is the practical application of a belief in a Divine Being, or divine beings, without whom much of human experience is unrelated, unsystematized, and bare of ordered connection.

(B) Proceeding with the analysis of belief, we pass on to notice the contribution of the emotional factor. Pure feeling is pure nonsense, as Flint pointedly expressed it, but all belief has an emotional colouring. Schleiermacher was the victim of the rationalistic crudities of his age. He suffered from an over-reaction against the *Aufklärung* with its repudiation of enthusiasm. As has so often been pointed out—for he is the outstanding example—Schleiermacher is guilty of gross over-emphasis of the feeling-factor in the religious consciousness. "Religion," he says, "is to have and to know life only in immediate feeling as existing in the infinite and eternal. Where this is found, religion is satisfied; where it hides itself, she is in anguish and disquietude. Religion is not knowledge or science, either of the world or of God."

As the Dean of St. Paul's reminds us, the emotional concept of God is very vague—"the pure mystical state is without form and void." This inevitable blankness can only be relieved by the cognitive apprehension of reality. Even the most extreme emotionalism in religion is not pure feeling in the sense that it is independent of, and uninfluenced by, judgment. This is not a question of chronological priority, although it might be fairly maintained that cognitive awareness must precede any focusing of the emotions. Obviously, the religious idea must be prior to the emotional reaction it provokes. That, of course, is true of feeling regarded as a distinct and definite element in consciousness; but as W. James and later psychologists have pointed out, there are cases where the mind is suffused with strong emotional tendencies to believe, and this unattached faith, so to speak, is fixed on the first appropriate object that presents itself. The con-

clusion drawn by B. Russell from this is that "much of what passes for revelation of mystic insight probably comes in this way: the belief-feeling in abnormal strength attaches itself more or less instantly to some content which we happen to think of at the appropriate moment."*

The prayerful spirit is peculiarly rich in emotional colouring. The feeling-element is very manifest in the recorded prayers of man, savage and civilized. The optative mood is essentially emotional, and while some prayers are but thinly disguised dissertations on the nature of God, and while from such we learn much respecting man's idea of God, others are best described as religious cries, the worshipful outlet of pent-up emotions.

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep
I heard a voice, "Believe no more,"
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep:

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, "I have felt."†

(C) Prayer, however, is essentially an act expressive of desire, a volitional directing and focussing of this desire upon an external reality conceived as superior and responsive. This leads us to consider the next factor in belief, that of conation.

It is upon the will that Bain bases belief.‡ While conceding the presence of the other factors of the psychic life, he predicates of the volitional that it is by far the most vital, the others being subsidiary. What we believe we act upon, and action is therefore an empirical test of belief. This, in rough, is the position of the modern school of pragmatists. Professor James held that "the

* "Analysis of Mind," p. 252.

† Tennyson, "In Memoriam," cxxiii.

‡ "Emotions and Will."

truth is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definite assignable reasons."* Now it must be recognized that there is much of truth in the pragmatist position. It emphasizes the practical aspect of belief, and relates faith to action. It stresses the necessity for the application and working out of conviction. But its faults are conspicuous. As has already been indicated in this essay, the working test of pragmatism is not, and cannot be, ultimate. What works well in this generation may fail utterly in the next, and what our ancestors found to be true on the pragmatist test we repudiate as the creation of primitive credulity. How can we tell that what works well to-day will receive an affirmative verdict in the next century? Moreover, the pragmatist principle is really superficial. It presupposes a standard much more fundamental.

Viewed from the theological standpoint, pragmatism emphasizes free will at the expense of divine immanence and human liberty at the expense of divine freedom; but in spite of all its faults it has the merit of recognizing the importance of the "will to believe," the volitional element in belief. This is the true significance of pragmatism. "The relation of belief to activity is expressed by saying that what we believe we act on." Human action is restricted and modified by environment, and in the nature of the case it is often impracticable to work out our beliefs in the external world; but human nature is ever striving to realize itself, and in religion each is seeking satisfaction for moral and spiritual needs. The self-conserving impulse in man manifests itself in religious belief, and belief being thus closely related to the conative tendencies of man's psychic constitution, it is worked out in practical conduct and worship. If this be the case, it is evident that in prayer we have the practical expression of man's striving to realize himself.

* "Pragmatism," p. 76.

In a very real sense it is true that prayer is a wish referred to God "I believe in God"—I therefore strive to realize my relationship to Him, and to project Godward my desires for fulness of life and wealth of personality. Prayer involves a "personal endorsement of reality," and more. It is a volitional striving to relate man's emotional needs to that reality cognitively realized as existing and as having significance for him. Leuba emphasizes the purposeful striving of man in religion, but declares that in the ultimate issue it is not a striving merely for religious satisfaction as such. "Not God," says he, "but life, more life, a larger, richer, and more satisfying life, is in the last analysis the end of religion. The love of life at any and every level of development is the religious impulse." The best Christian commentary on Leuba's statement is the great word of the Founder: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Whatever be the truth as to the instinctive basis of religion, the fact is clear that the history of prayer reveals a sustained volitional seeking for religious satisfaction. Man throughout his religious history has been seeking for a power or being superior to himself and responsive to his cries. He has pushed his search in many directions—often simultaneously in different directions—and he has abandoned one line of enquiry after another because he has found that it did not lead him where he would be.

There are thus three great presuppositions involved in the act of prayer. The first is predominantly cognitive. The prayerful soul believes in the actual existence of the spirits or spirit to which prayer may be addressed. The second is predominantly volitional. It is belief in the approachability and accessibility of the object of worship, in the possibility of focussing one's aims, impulses, and desires upon an appropriate centre. The third is predominantly emotional. It is the belief that there can be realized a spiritual communion between the human and the divine,

a relationship which issues in definite mutual intercourse. Let us examine these three aspects of prayer.

The Cognitive Aspect of Prayer.—Man's belief in supernatural beings as reflected in prayer has taken innumerable forms. The common denominator of all prayer is the belief in the real and efficacious existence of spiritual beings. There in the beyond, shrouded in mystery, possessing unique potency, is a power which can help man or destroy him. It is, therefore, his business to approach, praise, and propitiate that power if he desires well-being, safety, and fulness of life.

The belief in the supernatural is universal, and is coincident with prayer. While there is evidence that some deities are too remote for prayer, their place is taken by spirits more closely associated with communal life and activity. It can hardly be doubted that universally man has sought to establish relationship with spiritual beings which he has regarded as objectively real and existent. Neither is it open to doubt that prayer is the universal and invariable accompaniment of religion. "However far we penetrate into the records of the past, we find it characteristic of men to pray. We unroll Egyptian papyri, and find them filled with forms of prayer: we unearth Babylonian tablets, and amid all their sorceries and superstitions there is prayer; we translate the ancient books of India, Persia, and China, and they, too, are replete with prayer."

Now the content of this universal religious belief expressed in prayer is never the bare existence of spiritual powers. That belief has a content which varies almost indefinitely. Man cannot believe in the gods without believing something about them. "To assert the existence of God," says Dean Inge,* "is to make a judgment of fact, not a judgment of value." As a reply to the Ritschlian theory of the independence of the value-judgment and

* "Faith and its Psychology," p. 156.

the fact-judgment this statement may be conclusive. There can be no such independence, and the Göttingen professor is remarkably inconsistent in his teaching on the relationship between theoretical knowledge and practical belief. But Inge's statement, taken by itself, is misleading. True, the assertion of the existence of God is primarily a judgment of fact, but it is a judgment of existential and objectively real value, which is the same as saying that a belief in the existence of God cannot be held apart from some content referring to His value for the believer. Belief in God is a belief *sui generis*, and can never be a bare affirmation without content. God is a value, and the belief that He exists is therefore a belief in the existence of a value and a belief in the significance of that value for the believer.

Prayer is, therefore, as we have seen, coloured by multifarious beliefs regarding the nature of the object or objects of worship. The postulates of faith are diverse. They range from primitive credulity to the ideal contents of belief as analyzed by Dean Inge (following the Greek)—the good, the true, and the beautiful. The various religious theories to which expression has been given in the prayers of man are bewildering in their complexity and diversity. In them all, however, can be seen a sustained belief in the existence and ability of the gods. Sometimes the gods are tyrannical, and must be appeased; sometimes fickle, and must be interested; and sometimes loving, and can be approached with joy. Viewed from the evolutionary standpoint, this diversity in unity is not difficult to appreciate. Time proves that man is, in all his religious striving, advancing to pure and ideal conceptions.

The Volitional Aspect of Prayer.—In the second place, prayer as we have defined it presupposes belief in the accessibility of the spirit or spirits. Even where the actual deity is made remote by the sacramental mediation of an

elaborate and highly organized hierarchy, the humble worshipper believes that if the right media are used accessibility to the supernatural realm is assured. When steps are taken by the worshipper to compel the attention of the gods, we are on the border-line between the magical and the religious.

If the gods can be reached by man, several important consequences follow. Due regard must be paid to their superiority. *Praise must be an integral part of prayer.* For the Christian, "the praise of God is the soul and inspiration of worship."* So in the ancient religions we find praise as an integral part of prayer. "O Pachacamac," cried the sixteenth century Peruvian to the "world-animating spirit," "Thou who hast existed from the beginning and shalt exist until the end, who creates man by saying, 'Let man be,' who defends us from evil and preservest our life and health, art Thou in the sky, in the earth, in the clouds, or in the deep? Hear the voice of him who implorest Thee, and grant him his petitions. Give us life everlasting, preserve us and accept this our sacrifice."†

So, also, the Babylonian records contain many noble passages in praise of the gods. A goddess receives the following high homage: "O strong and majestic, highest of the goddesses, radiant star . . . whose robe is the light, thou who dost course through heaven and engirdle the earth . . . dealing punishment and pleading for men, rewarding the just, leading the wanderer, overthrowing the enemy who feareth not thy godhead, protecting the captive, taking the weak by the hand—be gracious unto thy servant who calls upon thy name with cries."‡

In proportion to the degree in which man exalts his god and magnifies his superiority, so does he recognize in his prayer the need for *purification* of heart by confes-

* Bishop Westcott, "Christian Susceptibilities of Life," p. 426.

† Carpenter, "Comparative Religion," p. 152.

‡ Farnell, "Evolution of Religion," pp. 222-3.

sion and penitence and by ritualistic measures. Among all the varied religious acts of man there is probably none that has been so widely prevalent throughout the different races of mankind as the ritual of purification, nor does any idea seem to have possessed so strong a legislative power in the various departments of our life as the concept of purity. This consciousness of the need for purification before successful approach can be made to the god naturally grows in strength as the ethical tone of religion deepens. Ritual by itself has a certain efficacy—often more or less magical—but it is not enough. God must be addressed with confession and prayer offered for forgiveness. Thus, the Inca of ancient Peru would confess his guilt, and while performing a ceremonial lustration in a neighbouring river would repeat the prayer-formula: "O thou River, receive the sins I have this day confessed unto the sun; carry them down to the sea and let them never more appear."*

"All ye who come before me," says the Japanese god of learning, Temmanga, "hoping to attain the accomplishment of your desires, pray with hearts pure from falsehood—within and without—reflecting the truth like a mirror."† Better known is the cry of the Psalmist, whose desire for fellowship with God is tempered by the consciousness of his guilt: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgression, for my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned. Cast me not away from Thy presence."

Generally speaking, as prayer advances from the savage to the civilized, the ethical tone deepens and becomes more pronounced, and the desires expressed are less selfish and materialistic. Such a statement, however, cannot be more than general, for the petitional element in many

* "Primitive Culture," ii. p. 435.

† Carpenter, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

modern prayers and prayer-hymns is surprisingly crude and materialistic, while amid the spontaneous, childlike, and naïve utterances of the savage for children, food, and success in war there is often found a prayer rich in highly ethical sentiment. Of the prayers in the Zend-Avesta, Farnell says: "In fact, the greater part of the prayers are strikingly spiritual, and for spiritual, not material blessings." Of less developed religions something similar might be said. The semi-civilized Aztecs, for example, offer the following prayer concerning a newly elected ruler:

"Make him, Lord, as your true image, and permit him not to be proud and haughty in your throne and court; but vouchsafe, Lord, that he may calmly and carefully rule and govern them whom he has in charge, the people, and permit not, Lord, that he may injure or vex his subjects, nor without reason and justice cause loss to any; and permit not, Lord, that he may spot or soil your throne or court with any injustice or wrong."*

Man's belief in the accessibility of the divine is, then, complementary to his desire to attain those spiritual and material benefits obtainable only from his God or gods. As the consciousness of sin awakens, the longing for pardon and purity becomes intensified, and the stronger the religious urge the more poignant and insistent becomes the cry for cleansing. We find this in the earliest religion of which we have record, and it enters prominently into the great Christian prayers. Man is for ever fighting the moral "ape and tiger," and there is an appealing magnificence in his age-long cry for divine aid in the struggle.

The Affective Element in Prayer.—The third great psychological presupposition of prayer is a belief in the possibility and reality of communion with the Divine. This is a belief in something more than the mere accessibility of the supernatural power. It postulates respon-

* "Primitive Culture," ii. p. 373.

siveness on the part of that power. Prayer is never a soliloquy, it is a reciprocative intercourse, an articulate fellowship, a communion in which both divine and human participate. Such fellowship is essentially mystical. It ranges from the ecstatic assurance of the savage that he has received new mana to those highest forms of mysticism in which identification with God is signalled by an intense rapture in which, as Eckhart expressed it, "the soul becomes God."

What has been called "Silent Prayer" is essentially the attitude of a soul which conceives itself to be in such real communion with the object of its adoration that the introduction of verbal forms would seem like sacrilege. Thomas à Kempis, Savonarola, Fénelon, Madame Guyon, and Père Grou are examples of devout natures which excelled in silent prayer. Farnell offers the suggestion that silent or inaudible prayer owes its origin to the belief that the true divine name must not be uttered. "The formulas with the divine name attached to them, being of such potency, they must be concealed." This would explain the well-established phenomenon of the reluctance of some religious peoples to use the name of the deity, exemplified by the Jewish scruples in regard to the sacred name Jahweh. It is clear in such cases that special potency, and sometimes magical efficacy, attaches to the divine name.

Such an explanation, however, can have no applicability to the silent prayer of the modern mystic. The Christian "prayer of simplicity" is a definite psychological state, produced by definite psychological means, with a definite psychological end, whether it be produced by repetition of the "Hail, Mary," or by prolonged discursive meditation. It has its roots, not in any superstition attaching to the divine name, but in the self-conserving desire for added strength and fuller life, attainable by surrender of the will. Communion in this more advanced and mystical form of

prayer involves definite submission of the human will. Epictetus prays: "Do with me what Thou wilt. My will is Thy will. I appeal not against Thy judgment."* Although, as will be illustrated in a later chapter,† prayer is often strongly self-assertive, yet in its quiescent forms it is predominantly characterized by voluntary submission. That this submissive and humble element is not confined to the prayer of advanced religion is illustrated by the following prayer of the Khonds of Orissa to the earth-gods: "We are ignorant of what it is good to ask for. You know what is good for us; give it us."‡

Then, at the other end of the scale, we have this noble prayer of St. Teresa:

"O Lord, how utterly different are Thy thoughts from our thoughts! From a soul which is firmly resolved to love Thee alone, and which has surrendered her whole will into Thy hands, Thou demandest only that she should harken, strive earnestly to serve Thee, and desire only to promote Thine honour. She need seek and choose no path, for Thou doest that for her, and her will follows Thine. Thou, O Lord, takest care to bring her to fuller perfection."§

There exists, for example, in Buddhism and the ancient Mithraic cult, as well as in some forms of Christianity, an elaborate technique by means of which intimate fellowship with the divine is attained. The faithful soldier of Mithra could attain an alliance with the divine nature through fasting, penance, the bloody rites of initiation, and various probations. The human soul, which has been separated from the divine nature and has descended to earth, can reascend and attain union with God through a process of fasting and penance which is taught in the

* Plato, "Alcibiades," ii. p. 143a.

† "Prayer and the Dominant Instincts."

‡ Farnell, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

§ Inge, "Christian Mysticism," p. 222.

mysteries; the sacrifice which is being always offered by Mithras makes this ascent and union possible. From the lowest terrestrial grade of Soldier, the soul ascended through the grades of the Bull and the Lion, and then through higher, quaintly named, grades until it attained complete union with the divine nature through the grades of Father Eagle, of Father Falcon, and of Father of Fathers. A holy cave on a hill was the central point in the worship; and the mystic rites involved watching and fasting all night till sunrise brought the triumph of light.*

The sublimated Jhana consciousness of modern Buddhism is deliberately induced by the elaborate process of mental elimination and concentration :

In five-fold concentrated ecstasy (Samadhi)
 My heart goes up in peace and unity.
 Serene composure have I made my own,
 My vision as a god's is clarified.
 I know the destinies of other lives,
 Whence beings come, and whither they do go,
 Life here below or otherwise of life—
 Steadfast and wrapped in five-fold Jhana sunk.†

Apart from these classic and more elaborate expressions of man's belief in the possibility of communion with his god, prayer is universally characterized by this feature. There can be no religion without a god,‡ and there can be no true prayer without a belief in the possibility of fellowship with that god. The savage is content to believe that his cry evokes a favourable response from the other-and-beyond, and is satisfied that such rudiments of fellowship should be intermittent and spontaneous. He is sure that certain wild rites put him into touch with the mysterious

* *Vide* Dr. G. H. Box's admirable booklet, "Early Christianity and its Rivals."

† Rhys Davids, "Buddhist Psychology," p. 116.

‡ For a clear and concise criticism of Durkheim's theory, see Dr. E. S. Waterhouse's "Philosophy of Religious Experience," pp. 12 ff.

source of life and power, a belief that lingers on far into the religious history of man. Dionysius is the god of inspiration as well as the god of wine. The modern mystic is equally certain of the validity of his experiences, but his transcendental visions and raptures are coloured by higher ethical standards, and are invariably interpreted in terms of current religious belief.

Of the Christian prayer-postulate more will be said in the course of our study. It is here that the conviction of the possibility of religious fellowship with God reaches its highest expression and is most intimately related to the elevating and purifying of human thought and action. Religious man has always aimed at a fuller realization of communion with the divine, but not until the Christ came did he apprehend that the Way is also the Truth and the Life.

Our discussion has brought to light the general psychological presuppositions of prayer—viz., faith in the existence of God, faith in His accessibility, and faith in His responsiveness—that is, in real communion with Him. All three elements are involved in man's agelong struggle after a realized fellowship with the divine, and all three still are, and always must be, psychologically constituent of prayer.

We have now reached a vantage-point from which it will be seen that prayer has a definite psychology of its own, a psychology which must be studied, if at all, in the light of the newer concepts of modern psychological thought and theory. What has the New Psychology to say in regard to the nature and the validity of prayer? What is its challenge, and how can it be met? The answer to these questions will occupy our attention throughout the remainder of this essay.

CHAPTER V

PRAYER AND THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

UP to this point we have been concerned with what may be termed, comparatively and for the sake of convenience, the general aspect of the development and the psychology of prayer. We have defined the subject of our study and elaborated its leading features, and we have traced its origin and growth in the consciousness of religious man. A psychological examination of the religious consciousness revealed as operative the volitional, intellectual, and feeling factors, which elements were demonstrated as corporately active in the attitude of believing prayer. The further advance which we propose to make in the study of the psychology of prayer brings us face to face with the great problems raised by the New Psychology and its challenge to the validity of Christian experience, and, indeed, religious experience in general.

Whatever view may be held as to the ultimate validity and sufficiency of the New Psychology, no modern student of psychological theory can afford to ignore its epoch-making claims, some of which are merely theoretical and exaggerated, but others intensely practical and based on adequate psycho-therapeutic evidence. At first sight it may seem a step aside from the main purpose of an essay on prayer to deal at any length with the claims of the New Psychology. Such subjects as Projection, Suggestion, Repressions, Instincts, and Hypnosis may seem to have little enough to do with prayer. Their relevance is apparent, however, as soon as it is realized that prayer is a religious act involving a definite psychological attitude and presupposing definite psychological processes, and, further, that an evidential treatise on prayer and its psycho-

logy must of necessity take into account the most recent advances in mental science. While we may find adequate grounds for the repudiation of the extreme theories of modern psychology, there is much in recent psychological thought that we are compelled to accept, and much that we gladly accept as vindicating the essential validity of the great Christian doctrines. The pan-sexuality of the Freudians, for example, may prove to be a gross exaggeration, and the technique of dream-interpretation somewhat overdone; but at the root of these extremes lies an important truth—viz., that the instinctive plays a far greater part in normal and abnormal mental life than the adherents of the older psychology realized or were willing to admit.

Now the New Psychology offers a definite challenge to the validity of religious experience, and we propose to examine that challenge in detail as it affects the great Christian doctrine of prayer. Before doing so, however, it will be necessary to offer an exposition of the main features of the advanced psychological thought, and with that exposition this chapter will be mainly concerned.

The recent developments in psychological theory have been concerned mainly with the exploration and analysis of the subconscious, or unconscious, processes of the mind, and, jointly with that, the investigation of abnormal mental states. Upon the findings of this modern psychology has been based an elaborate technique of psychotherapeutics, the practical success of which has in great measure authenticated and established the general theory upon which it has been based. The older psychology was largely academical. It had little real relationship to actual life, for its more or less abstract theories were concerned only with the conscious processes of the mind, and threw little, if any, light upon the problems of mental abnormality. The "discovery" of the unconscious, in the

modern understanding of it, was epoch-making, and led to much new thought and practice in religious, no less than medical, spheres. It has led medical practitioners to recognize that ætiology is as important in relation to the mind as to the body. Much mental disorder, it was revealed, is predominantly traceable to experiences which have passed out of the manifest and immediate conscious life. The older psychology over-stressed the part played by the conscious processes of the human mind, and did not appreciate the tremendous influence of the non-rational and unconscious mental activities.

It must not be supposed, however, that the fact of a mental life other than the immediately conscious was wholly unrecognized prior to the advent of what is now known as the New Psychology. Leibnitz taught the existence of "petites perceptions" too indistinct to be noticed or remembered. Sir William Hamilton believed that "the evidence on this point shows that the mind frequently contains whole systems of knowledge which, though in our normal state they have faded into absolute oblivion, may in certain abnormal states—as madness, febrile delirium, somnambulism, catalepsy, etc.—flash out into luminous consciousness, and even throw into the shade of unconsciousness those other systems by which they have for a long period been eclipsed and even extinguished."* J. S. Mill attributes to the nerves the unconscious modifications, and speaks of latent "elementary feelings," holding that "the feelings themselves are not present consciously or latently, but that the nervous modifications which are their usual antecedents have been present while the consequents have been frustrated and another consequent has been produced instead."†

G. T. Fechner's well-known wave-analogy illustrates the mind as a subliminal or "under-threshold" con-

* "Lectures on Metaphysics."

† "Examinations of Sir Wm. Hamilton's Phil.," p. 343.

tinuum, consciousness being the result of attention and discrimination in bringing above the general threshold ideas of varying intensity. The late Professor William James does not seem consistent in his treatment of the distinction between the conscious and the unconscious. In his "Principles" he calls it "the sovereign means for believing what one likes in psychology, and of turning what might become a science into a tumbling ground for whimsies."* Of the proofs for the existence of unconscious mental states, he says they are "one tissue of confusion. Two states of mind which refer to the same external reality . . . are described as the same state of mind or 'idea,' published as it were in two editions, and then whatever qualities of the second edition are found openly lacking in the first are explained as having really been there, only in an 'unconscious' way. It would be difficult to believe that intelligent men could be guilty of so patent a fallacy were not the history of psychology there to give the proof."†

Yet in his "Varieties" he is able to write in this strain: "The subconscious self is nowadays a well-accredited psychological entity, and I believe that in it we have exactly the mediating term required; apart from all religious considerations, there is actually and literally more life in our total soul than we are at any time aware of . . . imperfect memories, silly jingles, inhibitive timidities, 'dissolutive' phenomena of various sorts, as Myers calls them, enter into it for a large part, but in it many of the performances of genius seem also to have their origin."‡

Passing over, for the moment, the view of James Ward that the whole question is one of degrees of consciousness, and that of Bergson that the subconscious is the split-off consciousness, the existence of secondary parasitic selves

* Vol. i. p. 163.

† *Ibid.*, i. p. 172.

‡ James, *Ibid.*, pp. 511 f.

which are the centre of emotions or ideas "confused, ever-changing, and inexpressible," let us consider the advanced views of the modern schools of psycho-therapy as represented by Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Pierre Janet, and others.

The first keyword to the understanding of the Freudian "unconscious" is repression (*Verdrangung*), as distinct from suppression (*Unterdrückung*), the latter being the name applied to the deliberate and witting process of expelling undesirable emotions or memories from the conscious mind. Repression is unwitting or involuntary expulsion. It is "the normal mechanism by which nature protects the individual from such painful feelings as are caused by unpleasant and unacceptable experiences and thoughts—the recognition of his egoistic nature and the often quite unbearable conflict of his weaknesses with his feelings of idealism."* Painful or unpleasant emotions are repressed from consciousness, sometimes purposely, often without conscious intention; the conflict of incompatible impulses, often working obscurely or disguised by rationalizations, leads to the repression of one horn of the dilemma, the more unpleasant or repulsive motive, and is often the genesis of neurotic disability. According to the New Psychology, there is nothing arbitrary in any morbid manifestation; the abnormal can be traced back to the normal. In his "Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life," Freud shows how the forgetting of proper names and foreign words, mistakes in speech, reading, writing, and actions, etc., are all ultimately due to repressions from consciousness. All such apparently chance phenomena can be referred to unwelcome repressed psychic material, which, though pushed away from consciousness, is nevertheless not robbed of all capacity to express itself.

Now the mental realm or state to which these unpleasant emotions and memories are repressed is called the

* Jung-Hinkle, "Psychology of the Unconscious," p. xiv.

unconscious or subconscious, a term used more or less arbitrarily to indicate that which is not present to the consciousness and not normally recoverable by it. Thus, according to Charles Baudouin, "the subconscious is a storehouse of the memories that have lapsed from the ordinary consciousness of a distant past, but it is far from being inert, for it contains in addition the subsoil waters, which are unceasingly at work; it contains the suggestions which will well up into the open after their hidden passage."* From this repository of all the mental elements nauseous to consciousness emerge at times "uprushes" or "outcroppings" into the conscious life. This re-emergence of the repressed elements is favoured by relaxation of attention and inhibition such as is the case in sleep or reverie, and especially in hypnosis.

Of the nature of this unconscious realm little is known. It is claimed that while the basis of mental structure is hereditary and relatively permanent, the contents of the unconscious are all the result of the actual experience of the individual. The Freudians in particular do not hesitate to follow out the consequences of this theory as applied to the earlier stages of human life, but find unsuspected influences at work in the mind of the infant and very young child.

Freud himself is content for the unconscious to remain a negative concept, and has attempted no detailed analysis or definition of its nature. His hypothesis as to its functional structure is that between the unconscious processes proper (*das Unbewusste*) and the conscious there operate "foreconscious" or "preconscious" processes (*das Vorbewusste*). Between the preconscious and the unconscious operates the Censor (*die Zensur*), a resistance which opposes the penetration of repressed elements to the conscious sphere. The Censor appears also to operate between the preconscious and the conscious.

* "Suggestion and Auto-suggestion," p. 129.

Freud's celebrated dream-theory is the application of his general theory of consciousness to the interpretation of dreams. Dreams are but the working out of wish-fulfilment (*Wunscherfüllung*). In dreams egoistic wishes realize themselves, and all dreams are related to wish-fulfilment. Often these are unworthy desires, which are repressed in the waking life of the subject, but gain access to consciousness during sleep. The theory is that the endo-psychic Censor, as it is called, is not so watchful during the sleeping moments, and, accordingly, wishes disguised in symbolic form by dream-work (*Traumarbeit*) elude its resistance and emerge into the dream-consciousness.

Another keyword to the understanding of the Freudian theory of the unconscious is "sublimation" (*Sublimierung*), a term used to denote "the use of psychic energy belonging to a primitive instinct in a higher or non-primitive channel,"* or, to use Dr. Hadfield's definition, it is "the process by which instinctive emotions are diverted from their original ends and redirected to purposes satisfying to the individual and of value to the community."† The repressed instinctive desires buried in complexes are induced to surrender their energy or libido under this process, and this energy is directed to higher purposes, as, for instance, is seen in the redirection or sublimation of the sex-instinct into religious or æsthetic channels.

This process of the utilization for higher ends of energy derived from the repression of instincts is operative in all phases of life. Freud sees in the process nothing more than the sublimation of repressed infantile tendencies, but other leading psychologists use the term to denote a much wider operation. All instinctive energies are capable of sublimation, and there is abundant evidence of the universality of the process. The principle of sublimation,

* Tansley, "New Psychology," p. 301.

† "Psychology and Morals," p. 21.

widely conceived, is exemplified in the life of the family, the school, the group, and the nation. It plays a great part in all moral development, and, not least, in the education of the young.

There are, of course, many major and minor divergencies from the views of Professor Freud. Dr. C. J. Jung, for instance, differs from his former master in a number of important points. He does not accept the pan-sexuality of Freud. For the leader of the Zurich school the term "libido" denotes an energy which is related not to the sex-instinct alone but to all the instinctive foundations of the mental life. Freud, of course, does recognize the operative and determining influence of the other dominant instincts, but considers that of sex as primary in strength and effect. Jung finds in the unconscious not only repressed desires, but also instinctive and innate tendencies, which make the unconscious the originating factor in all the higher imaginative and intuitional operations of the mind. Moreover, in the realm of psycho-pathology Jung does not look to infantile traumata for the cause of adult neurosis. He definitely places the cause of the pathogenic conflict in the present moment, and considers that in seeking for the cause in the distant past one is only following the desire of the patient, which is to withdraw himself from the present painful period.*

It should be clearly understood that in giving this brief exposition of the teaching of Freud and more or less kindred spirits we have been dealing with extremes. The pioneers who blaze the trail of new thought are invariably proved to be extremist by those who follow on and examine their claims. Consequently, there are many eminent psychologists who have gladly recognized the value of the bold thinking of Freud and his sympathizers, but

* For a good exposition of the divergencies between Freud and Jung, see Beatrice Hinkle's "Introd. to Jung's Psychology of the Unconscious."

have emphatically rejected the wilder elements in their teaching. They all have in common an intensified interest in those mental processes which are below the threshold of consciousness, while for all the practical application of the new thought to the science of psycho-therapeutics is of paramount importance. Both moderates and extremists realize that they stand on the threshold of a new era in psychological thought and practice, wherein their science is no longer hampered by almost exclusive devotion to the conscious processes of the mind.

Since, then, the concept of the unconscious is of such fundamental importance to the New Psychology, and since, as will be shown subsequently, it has real and vital significance for the study of prayer, it is necessary to come to a decision respecting its nature and function. This can best be attempted in the present introductory chapter. In subsequent chapters specific aspects of the subject will be discussed in the light of their relationship to prayer, and it is not necessary at this point to do more than indicate briefly the merits and demerits of the Freudian theory of the unconscious, and to frame a working theory of our own.

Bertrand Russell makes merry over the vagueness of the Freudian concept. He says: "Freud and his followers, though they have demonstrated beyond dispute the immense importance of 'unconscious' desires in determining our actions and beliefs, have not attempted the task of telling us what an 'unconscious' desire actually is, and have thus invested their doctrine with an air of mystery and mythology which forms a large part of its popular attractiveness. They speak always as though it were more normal for a desire to be conscious, and as though a positive cause had to be assigned for its being unconscious. Thus, the 'unconscious' becomes a sort of underground prisoner, living in a dungeon, breaking in at long intervals upon our daylight respectability with

dark groans and maledictions and strange atavistic lusts. The underground prisoner is another consciousness prevented by what Freud calls the 'Censor' from making his voice heard in company except on rare and dreadful occasions, when he shouts so loud that everyone hears him and there is a scandal. Most of us like the idea that we could be desperately wicked if only we let ourselves go. For this reason the Freudian 'unconscious' has been a consolation to many quiet and well-behaved persons."*

Now in the nature of the case the concept of the unconscious must be more or less relative. It can be treated of only in terms of conscious thought, and the categories of that thought must be arbitrarily applied to a realm where their validity is hypothetical. Nevertheless, in relation to the real genetic nature of unconscious thought, Mr. Russell's facetious criticism of the Freudian vagueness is well founded. The Freudians are by no means vague, however, in their treatment of the contents and the operative laws of the subliminal processes of thought. They tell us, with academic assurance, far more about the unconscious than most of us can find adequate justification for.

Undoubtedly there is more in the mind than consciousness—*i.e.*, the conscious mental life is very intimately affected by elements that are not conscious, mental elements that are not accompanied by awareness of them; but whether modern psychologists are justified in describing the unconscious as a realm bearing no necessary genetic relationship to the conscious, as a separate entity divided by two "boundaries" and inhabited only by repressed undesirables, this is entirely another matter.

What *is* the unconscious? Freud answers: "Properly speaking, the unconscious is the real psychic; its inner nature is just as unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and is just as imperfectly reported to us through the data of consciousness as is the external world

* "Analysis of Mind," p. 38.

through the indications of our sensory organs.”* What, then, constitutes this realm of which we know so little? What is its origin? It is in the answer to this further question that the unsatisfactoriness and the arbitrariness of the Freudian postulate really appears. The unknowable unconscious is, after all, better known than the conscious.

The “imperfectly reported” and “unknown” unconscious is credited with an elaborate form and a clearly defined content. It is composed entirely of repressions in the form of “complexes” derived from the sex-instinct—“a mere fermenting dung-heap,” as McDougall tersely describes it. Thus, according to the Freudian psychology, the oldest and deepest stratum in the structure of the unconscious is composed of repressed erotic phantasies and sexual wish-impulses which are expelled from the infantile mind. Then come the repressions of later life, which are brought about mainly through the subliminal activities of the infantile nucleus, and in the struggle of consciousness to prevent the reappearance of the repressed material and the related psychic formations we have the source both of the neurosis and the dream.†

There must be more in the not-conscious region of the mind than repressions, either infantile or adult. It is in closer conformity with the general theory of evolution as applied to human development to postulate an essential genetic and generic relationship between the conscious and the unconscious processes of thought. Upon the fundamental basis of the synthetizing unity of self-consciousness depends the stability of thought. The precondition of all thought is the consciousness of self, and this is, as we have already seen, a result of antecedent reactions to the universe. The unconscious is originally the prior-to-conscious, and becomes the natural primitive form

* “Traumdeutung” (translated Brill), p. 486.

† See, for a concise note on the Freudian unconscious, Hitschmann, “Freud’s Theory of the Neuroses,” pp. 84, 85.

of desire from which conscious thought develops through observation and theorizing.

Freudian repression undoubtedly occurs, but it is not the fundamental reason for the unconsciousness of our wishes. All our impulses are obviously unconscious to begin with, and may conceivably remain so apart altogether from the repressing activities of conscious thought. Neither is it probable that the contents of the unconscious are of the undesirable character indicated by the Freudian school. Whence come those finer impulses which receive the spontaneous and universal approbation of humanity? Sublimated sexuality is totally inadequate as an explanation of the origin of altruism, and its noble fruits, and our "moral sense" has its root, not in the resurrection of infantile impulses buried by the expulsive activity of consciousness, but in the interaction of developing selves which accompanies and conditions the evolution of conscious thought.

The unconscious is the primary and fundamental form of all mental activity wherein originate and operate the dominate impulses of human life and from which may be brought forth things new and old, good and bad. It is there that the transforming influences of religion leave their permanent mark, and it is there, alas! that evil works its havoc. The unconscious states are, therefore, more profound than the conscious. They are, to use Dr. William Sanday's words, "subtler, further-reaching, more penetrating."

There is profound significance in this conception for the study of prayer. Communion with God is considerably more than a process of thought. It reaches beyond the present and immediate in consciousness and involves the whole psychic constitution of man. Conscious thought relating to the Divine-human fellowship obtaining in prayer is but the making articulate of reactions and impulses experienced subliminally or unconsciously, and it

may be doubted whether man ever prays in an ideal, and therefore real, sense unless his worship involves more than conscious thought and verbal expression.

Probably enough has now been said to indicate the vast problems introduced by the New Psychology. In a two-fold respect they have significance for religion. New light has been thrown on the nature of thought, and a definite challenge has been offered to the validity of the religious postulate. We are again confronted with a purely subjectivistic interpretation of religion, this time in a new form. Religion for Freud is "nothing but psychology projected into the outer world";* for Jung, "psychologically understood, the divinity is nothing else than a projected complex of representation which is accentuated in feeling according to the degree of religiousness of the individual. So God is to be considered as the representative of a certain sum of energy (libido)";† for Leuba, "religious mysticism is a revelation not of God but of man."‡

It is not difficult, therefore, to realize that an entirely new and inimical interpretation of religious experience is offered by certain schools of the newer psychological thought. If the Freudian insistence on determinism is correct, and if whatever the devout mind holds dear and conceives to be objectively real is a subjective, albeit a temporarily valuable, creation; and if, further, prayer is auto-suggestion pure and simple, and communion with God a delusion, then there is nothing more to be said. Religion is dead, whether we dress it in the comely robes of "cosmic gregariousness" (Leuba), or attribute to it unique complex-resolving power; it is devoid of ultimate and objective reality, and is doomed to disappear altogether as the race advances.

* "Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life," p. 310.

† "Psychology of the Unconscious," p. 38.

‡ "Philosophy Religious Mysticism," p. 318.

Fortunately, however, for those who would deplore the passing of so vital an element in their relationship with reality, the Freudian excursions into epistemology and metaphysics are by no means convincing. While, confessedly, a great debt is owing to the Vienna scholar and others for the facts established by their psycho-therapeutic investigations, that debt must not blind us to the weaknesses of their philosophy.

In the following pages an attempt will be made to examine the leading concepts of the New Psychology as they affect the study of prayer. Believing that the Christian cause stands to gain and not to lose by a candid and well-reasoned recognition of the substantial nucleus of truth in modern psychology, we shall endeavour to discover what is true and relate it to the great Christian doctrine of prayer.

CHAPTER VI

PRAYER AND THE DOMINANT INSTINCTS

WRITING on the modification of instinctive action by thought-processes, Dr. R. H. Thouless says: "It is customary at the present day to minimize the influence of thought-processes on conduct and to emphasize the influence of the instincts. This anti-intellectualism is probably only an exaggeration of the necessary reaction against a past exaggeration of thought-processes, which seemed to regard these as the prime movers of all action."*

Scientific thought, it appears, is not wholly free from the exaggerated reaction deprecated by Thouless, and, as is natural enough, popular thought is guilty of extreme ambiguity and inconsistency in its use of the terminology of psychology. The New Psychology has been popularized to an extent never attained by the older psychology, and it has paid the penalty of its appeal to popular thought. Such words as "complex," "instinct," "sub-conscious," "suggestion," and the like, are used every day with the scantiest respect for their real meaning. Popular theology is probably no less guilty in this respect than popular journalism.

The misuse of the word "instinct," of course, does not date from the inception of the newer psychological thought. There has always been a false antithesis presumed to exist between the "intelligent" and the "instinctive" factors in human mental life. The biological thesis of the essential community of human mentality with that of subhuman creatures has, indeed, shown that "reason" cannot be divorced from its instinctive bases,

* "Social Psychology," p. 51.

but it has also supplied us with an over-plus of emphasis on the contribution of the latter to normal thought. The truth, as always, lies between the extremes. Granted that man is the grand product of evolutionary processes, and that he is generically related to lower forms of animal life, it will follow that the basis of his mental structure, however elaborate that may be, is constituted by the instincts he shares with those lower forms. On the other hand, his superiority lies in the fact that his instinctive impulses are to a great extent controlled and modified by rational thought-processes.

What is an instinct? Defined in general terms, it is an innate disposition or tendency initiating, and in greater or less degree determining, the behaviour of an organism. It is a primary or basic impulse which in the lower forms of life expresses itself spontaneously and with little or no adaptive variability, and which in mankind normally operates under the modifying control of the higher thought-processes.

McDougall's definition is widely quoted, and has a widely recognized value. He says: "We may, then, define an instinct as an inherited or innate psycho-physical disposition which determines its possessor to perceive, and to pay attention to, objects of a certain class; to experience an emotional excitement of a particular quality upon perceiving such an object, and to act in regard to it in a particular manner, or, at least, to experience an impulse to such action."*

At the root, then, of the volitional and emotional activities of the human mind, there lie great primary forces which are known as instincts. It will be necessary for our study of prayer in relation to the instinctive in man to distinguish and classify the various dominant instincts which initiate and influence human behaviour. Before entering upon that stage, however, we need to

* "Social Psychology," p. 29.

clear the ground by answering another question—viz., Is there a religious instinct? Is there scientific support for such popular phrases as “the religious instinct,” “the instinct of prayer,” or “the instinct of worship”?

Let us note what may be said in favour of the view that one of the “innate psycho-physical dispositions” determining or modifying human behaviour is that which impels or disposes him to seek communion with the Divine.

First, it may be said that the term “instinct” should be applied not only to specifically innate tendencies to action, but also to those acquired, habituated tendencies which have become partially or wholly automatic, and which owe their strength to social tradition and social environment. On this view, even if the impulse to worship be not innate, it is certainly a natural, universal, and primarily a spontaneous reaction. Behind all the superstructure and the multifarious forms of religion there is a primal impulse which, if not instinctive in the stricter sense, is “secondarily automatic,” and may, with general accuracy, be called an instinct. This, of course, is purely a matter of definition. If we distinguish instinctive from acquired reaction, as is necessary for the sake of accuracy, and apply the latter description to prayer, we have really furnished an argument against the existence of an instinct of prayer.

In the next place, emphasis may be laid on the essential universality of prayer. This, it may be said, is a true mark of the instinctive. For, manifestly, prayer or worship is man’s characteristic response to the Unknown. Civilized man, only less than the savage, reacts spontaneously to the grandeur of the Niagara Falls or the glory of the Aurora Borealis.

Again, there is a peculiar emotional strength associated with the religious impulse. The affective element is often predominant, and where the other mental factors

are weak will run into wild excess. Moreover, history is emphatic enough in declaring that where persecution has endeavoured to impede the activity of the religious impulse religious feeling has been intensified—*Sanguis martyrum semen ecclesiæ*. All the basic instincts are accompanied by strong emotional propensity which receives intensified expression where the instinctive activity is impeded. Conversely, the emotional fervour excited by religious persecution makes it highly probable that religion is instinctive. And if authoritative precedent is required for the use of the phrase "religious instinct," there are ready to hand the writings of Professors Jastrow and Starbuck.

Now, it is not sufficient to point out in repudiation of the "religious instinct" thesis that religion is complex at root, and can have no single instinctive source; that in it we find operative, for instance, the instincts of fear, sex, submission, assertion, and the gregarious instinct: for it may be questioned if any of the innate tendencies of man's psychic constitution receive simple expression. What is called the instinct of acquisition, for example, whether interpreted as the impulse to gain or as the impulse to hold,* is either way essential to the satisfaction of most of the basic instincts. The acquisitive tendency is very intimately related to, and modified by, such instincts as the nutritive and the sexual.

It is, however, not difficult to see that an argument from the affective character of religion, while it creates a strong presumption in favour of the theory that prayer is instinctive, adds but little strength to the case for a specific instinct of prayer. The same may be said of the universality of religion. Both these points indicate an instinctive root, but they are equally valuable whether that instinctive basis be regarded as single or complex.

Modern psychology in general will have none of the

* Rivers, "Instinct and the Unconscious," p. 260.

“religious instinct,” and for the following reasons the theory of a specific instinct of religion must be rejected.

Man's affinity with the beasts that perish is clearly seen in the community of instinct which he shares with them. The study of human behaviour is never adequate apart from investigation of the crude and unmodified instinctive processes operative in the lower orders. It is therefore customary and scientific to refer to the animal world when seeking evidence of the existence of a specific instinct in man, as, for instance, Dr. Rivers does in proving the existence of an instinct of acquisition. If, now, this method be adopted in regard to the “instinct of prayer,” or the “religious instinct,” what is the result? Man has at the root of his psychic being certain dominant, innate, and driving impulses, such as the instincts of the herd, of sex, and of self-conservation. These are much more clearly discernible among animals than among men. There are, therefore, strong analogical grounds for expecting that, if man has an instinct of prayer or worship, such an instinct will be more crudely and more clearly operative among animals. Such, of course, is not the case. Even if we stretch and distort the definition of prayer sufficiently to include within its scope those moods of the higher sub-human animals which appear to approach the religious, we are no nearer the proof of the existence of a religious instinct. Prayer still remains, to a vast extent, peculiar to man, whereas, if instinctive, it should be more conspicuous in animal life, where there is lacking the modifying influence of the more developed thought-processes which really are peculiar to man.

Secondly, the postulate of a specific instinct to account for religion is unnecessary. It has been commonly believed, and to a slowly diminishing extent is still believed, that man is uniquely gifted with the so-called instinct which impels him to seek fellowship with the

Divine. It is easier to hold that view if we reject the evolutionary hypothesis of the brute-ancestry of man, but no anthropologist is prepared to reject the hard-won discoveries of Darwin and Wallace, much as he may wish to qualify them. Should it be maintained by some who accept the evolutionary theory of man's origin that upon his emergence from the bestial a Divine interposition bestowed upon him the instinct of worship as the insignia of his newly won attainment, the reply must be made that such a postulate is highly imaginative, and is but a revival of the *Deus ex machina* stratagem of medieval philosophy. All the phenomena associated with man's religious striving are explicable in terms of the current and established findings of modern psychology, and there is simply no need to perpetuate that theory of an instinct of prayer which owes its origin to an unscientific repudiation of man's physical and psychic affinity with the animal.

Concurrently with the growth of that elaborate modification and diversification of instinctive processes which are peculiar to the human as distinct from the animal, there emerges an emotional reaction to the external world which is truly religious. This reaction becomes more specific and defined as civilization is attained, but may be said to retain in all stages of human development an emotional colouring which indicates an instinctive basis, or, more correctly, instinctive bases. Prayer, then, as the articulation of the religious spirit, is instinctive at root, but is not actuated solely by one particular and peculiar instinct. The instinctive foundation of religion is composite.

There can be no reasonable doubt as to the essential universality and the inherent vitality of religion. In denying the existence of a specific instinct of religion we are not rejecting the obvious relationship of the religious to the instinctive. Prayer and religion in general are native to man, simply because his instincts being what they are, such is his natural reaction to the Unknown and the

Awful. We conclude, therefore, that while there is no "instinct of prayer" in the stricter sense of the word, yet prayer is instinctive at root. Not only is it instinctive in origin, but, as a universal exercise pervading the religious individual's whole life, it is closely related to the basic instincts of his psychic nature. The further purpose of this chapter is to elucidate and analyze that relationship.

We now come to the deferred attempt to analyze and classify the so-called dominant instincts in preparation for the study of their relationship to prayer. It is scarcely within the province of this essay to embark upon a discussion of the relative merits of the various classifications of the instincts. A number of writers accept Professor McDougall's classification, but certain features of it call for modification. It is difficult, for instance, to follow McDougall in his refusal to admit an instinct of imitation. Without acquiescing in the over-emphasis of Le Bon, we find it impossible to escape the force of the late Wm. James' view that imitativeness, in the strict sense of the copying of physical movement, "is an instinct in the fullest sense of the word." The divisions drawn by McDougall between instincts are very largely artificial, and there is nothing sacred in the number he has distinguished. In regard to his theory of the relationship between the instincts and the emotions, a similar reservation must be made. The scheme is arbitrary and forced in places.

It is possible to divide the instincts into three groups, for which purpose we may adopt the biological classification of Dr. W. H. R. Rivers in his "Instinct and the Unconscious." There may, of course, be some objection to applying a biological standard to a purely psychological classification. R. H. Thouless, for instance, points out the difficulty of placing the "instinct of acquisition" in any one of the three biological groups. The difficulty, however, seems to us more apparent than real, for the instinct named is primarily a self-preserving instinct, and

its operation in other systems does not necessarily affect the question of its primary function.

According, then, to the biological scheme of Rivers and J. T. MacCurdy, the instincts function either in the interests of (*a*) self-preservation, (*b*) reproduction, or (*c*) society, which are connected respectively with the preservation of the individual, the race, and the herd. As human conduct is initiated, controlled, and coloured to a great extent by the fundamental and dominant impulses, and as religion is concerned with all aspects of man's life, it is hardly disputable that the form and substance of religion will take their rise in primary instinctive reactions, and will be influenced all through their development by instinctive tendencies, progressively tempered and modified by experience.

I. PRAYER AND THE INSTINCTS OF SELF-PRESERVATION

It has been shown in a previous chapter that prayer is the articulate response of early man to the universe. His emotional response is composite, having in it the elements of wonder, fear, admiration, elation, and love, and these emotions are conditioned by the instincts of escape or flight, submission, self-assertion, curiosity, and the parental instinct. With the exception of the last-named instinct, which is essentially gregarious or social in character, these are all included in the group of self-preservative instincts. Of this group the two dominant and primary instincts are those of submission and self-assertion, the former, in relation to the cognate instinct of fear or flight, being at the root of savage and civilized sacrificial and propitiatory systems; and the latter, assisted by the instinct of curiosity or enquiry, being at the root of man's agelong search after fuller and more satisfying life—to find, in the phrase of Smith and Perry, "Givers of Life."

Biologically considered, both submission and assertion

are indispensable to the survival of the individual. In the presence of superior power, self-assertion with its cognate impulses would lead to inevitable destruction, while submission to inferior or even equal power would mean extinction in the struggle for survival. Psychologically regarded, these two instincts lie at the centre and root of the self-regarding sentiment and what is known as the "ego-complex"—the system of mental dispositions related to the ego-instincts. Universally operative, and fundamental to all self-consciousness, the instincts of the self find free expression in religious as in secular utterances. In prayer man gives expression to the best and the worst that is in him. His attitude to his God or gods reflects his attitude to life in general, but in the former are revealed more clearly the basic factors and processes in his psychic constitution.

The study of prayer may be approached from many angles. It may be viewed as illustrating man's idea of God, or his conception of his own relationship to God, or, again, as illustrative of man's idea of himself as expressed in the needs he emphasizes. These lines of approach are not mutually exclusive. Each involves reference to the others.

Let us look at man's idea of God and the correlated idea of his own needs as shown in prayer, and as illustrating the operation of the submissive impulse in religion. In thus approaching the study of this particular aspect of prayer, we are dealing with the very heart of religion itself. The fundamental idea of religion is man's idea of God.

(a) Professor Rudolph Otto, in his "Idea of the Holy" (*Das Heilige*), shows very clearly how what he calls the "numinous"—which stands for the transcendental in religious experience, the contents of "the specific non-rational religious apprehension"—is conceived by man in terms and values appropriate to his stage of culture. The "un-

named Something" may be awful, sublime, wrathful, jealous, etc., and, according to Otto, "Its nature is such that it grips or stirs the mind with this and that determinate affective state." It is a *Mysterium Tremendum*, the experience of which has as elements in its qualitative content, "Awfulness," "Over-poweringness" (*majestas*), "Energy" or "Urgency," "Wholly Otherness," and "Fascination." Certain elements in this analysis of the idea of the Holy have already been discussed in their bearing on religious origins, and they constitute an appropriate starting-point for our examination of

Prayer as Submission

The idea of the Holy as being the Awful and the Mysterious has, as we have seen, as its correlative emotion a sense of dependence, a "creature-feeling," which issues in self-depreciation and self-abasement. Man both fears and hopes. Submission is his natural reaction to that which is greater than he, and before the mystery in which life and the universe are surrounded, he bows himself in fearful and hopeful supplication. "Let not Thy dread make me afraid," cries the smitten Job, while the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is equally conscious of the awfulness of God—"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The God who met Moses "by the way in the inn . . . and sought to kill him" is not less terrible than the God of Luther, who is "more terrible and frightful than the devil. For He dealeth with us and bringeth us to ruin with power, smiteth and hammereth us, and payeth no heed to us."

As with the untutored savage, so with the civilized mystic, God is a consuming fire. Moses hides his face, "for he was afraid to look upon God," and Isaiah cries, "Woe is me! For I am undone . . . for mine eyes have seen

the King, the Lord of Hosts," while, on the other hand, at the root of the horrible atonement sacrifices of the ancient Mexicans, and the sacrifice of children to the Canaanitish Moloch, is the conception of the Divine as awful, bloodthirsty, and vengeful.

Of Divine Overpoweringness or Majesty much has already been said. It has been shown that prayer presupposes a recognized superiority. An inferior deity would be magically coerced, not prayerfully approached. "Hallowed be Thy Name" is a sentiment implicitly, if not explicitly, present in all true prayer. It is this sense of the Divine superiority which impels man to pray for purity, for pardon, and for reinstatement. For who can approach the ineffable glory of the Divine save those who by prayer and sacrifice are made pure, and who by submissive entreaty and appropriate penance receive forgiveness and favour? "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. . . ."

Moreover, prayerful man seldom escapes from the consciousness of his own limitations. He is for ever confronted with circumstances over which he has little, if any, control and in which he is baffled and impotent. There is nothing he can do save to cast himself upon the Divine mercy and submit himself to the Divine will. The writer of the 107th Psalm knew human nature—"They that go down to the sea in ships . . . these see the works of the Lord . . . for He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind. . . . They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses."

Consider, too, the vivid consciousness of unworthiness experienced by prayerful man. That religious genius, John Bunyan, says: "But my original and inward pollution; that was my plague and affliction, that I saw at a

dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me; that I had the guilt of, to amazement; by reason of that, I was more loathesome in mine own eyes than was a toad, and I thought I was so in God's eyes too." Under affliction devout man is persuaded that submission to the Divine will is inevitable and right. Even death itself, that age-long and terrifying mystery, than which there is no greater reminder to man of his limitation of knowledge and power, even death itself loses its terrors, and mourning its pangs; when the heart of man is submissive to the immutable order of things. Probably Longfellow wrote nothing finer or more delicate than his "Resignation":

Let us be patient. These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

Mysticism may be said to be predominantly submissive, although by no means exclusively so. At its best, Christian mysticism is not a *via negativa*, a process of elimination and abstraction of all the Divine attributes, such as we find, for example, in Clement of Alexandria, but a process of self-denial, the voluntary losing of one's soul that it may be found again in possession of a fuller and a richer life. This is finely expressed by John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist. He says: "By self-denial I mean the soul's quitting all its own interest in itself, and an entire resignation of itself to Him as to all points of service and duty; and thus the soul loses itself in God, and lives in the possession, not so much of its own being as of the Divinity, desiring only to be great in God, to glory in His light, and spread itself in His fulness; to be filled always by Him,

and to empty itself again into Him; to receive all from Him, and to expend all for Him; and so to live, not as its own, but as God's."*

The negative self-feeling which religious man experiences is expressed in the characteristic attitudes of prayer. As Professor Heiler shows in "Das Gebet," *Die Körperhaltungen* include kneeling, sitting, standing, bowing, and prostrating oneself. *Die Händehaltungen* include lifting the arm, beating the breast, striking the ground, and similar manifestations of reverence and humility. Equally illustrative of the submissive impulse in prayer is the covering of the feet, the head, and the body. There is a cognate significance in the creations of religious art. Consider, for instance, the repulsive and terrifying images of heathendom, the majesty of Sphinx and Pyramids, the magnificence of Eastern temples, and the oppressive grandeur of the more important buildings of the Roman Church. So, also, in regard to the crashing eloquence of the great sacred oratorios. The listener approximates very closely to the awe and reverence of primitive man.

Passing on to the study of

Prayer as Self-Assertion,

we note that the instinct of self-assertion manifests itself in prayer in many ways. It is revealed in a passionate seeking for God, in the plea for victory over one's enemies and over one's own weakness, in the universal association of the magical with the prayerful, and in the common petition for enhanced power and fulness of life. "Prayer," says Francis Thompson, "is the very sword of the saints." Where ritualistic and liturgical forms have not robbed it of its native freshness, prayer has always the note of urgency. It may be the cry of utter dependence and desperate submission, or it may be the strong cry of

* Quoted Inge, "Christian Mysticism," p. 291.

a dominant desire which sees its hope of fulfilment in a Being or beings supernatural and beneficent. The phrase "wrestling in prayer," which owes its inspiration and origin to the Old Testament story of the lonely Jacob, "wrestling until the breaking of the day," has become part of the Christian vocabulary of worship. There could, probably, be no phrase more suited to describe both the intense prayer-state of the mystic and the frenzied reiteration of the savage prayer-formulæ.

We have said that assertive prayer is the positive expression of a passionate seeking for God. Listen to the German mystic, Henry Suso, who, in order to tame his "refractory body," endured sixteen years of cruel and austere penance: "Loving, tender Lord! My mind has from the days of my childhood sought something with an earnest thirst of longing, Lord, and what that is have I not yet perfectly apprehended. . . . Now my heart rages for it, for fain would I possess it. . . . Woe is me! . . . What is this, or how is it fashioned, that plays within me in such hidden wise?"

The same note of urgency and passion in the search for God is present, conspicuously, in the prayers of St. Augustine: "Let my soul even seek Thee, and let me persist in seeking till I have found and am in full possession of Thee."

Prayer degenerates into spell when religious man yields to the impulse to dominate and control his God or gods. It is difficult to escape from the conclusion that the magical enters more largely into civilized religion than is fully realized. Many prayers are but ill-disguised attempts to thrust the human will upon the Divine, and where man seeks by coercive phrases to compel his deity, the shadow of magic falls across the path of prayer. What a sorry conception of prayer is contained, for example, in the exhortation heard by the writer uttered by the leader of a prayer-meeting in a mission hall—"Keep God to His

promises! Keep Him there! Keep Him there!" What the blunt exponent of devotional theology (a man of undoubted earnestness and sincerity) meant was probably, "Believe in the Divine promises and plead them in prayer"; but even if thus generously interpreted, the thought behind the words is primitive. Every minister of religion knows the habitual frequency with which Scriptural promises are converted into something closely akin to spell-formulæ. The devotee rejoices in the possession of certain texts, which he uses with the blindest disregard for the context, and these he urges in prayer as Divine "promises." In the South of England the author has frequently been invited, in the course of pastoral visitation, to "take a promise from the box." This consists in taking from a cardboard box a tiny roll of paper on which is printed a Scriptural text. The box contains a hundred or so of similar rolls, and the selected text is expected to have some special significance for the life of its possessor. Respect for the feelings of these good and earnest folk has prevented one from denouncing the practice, but it is nothing less than a degradation of Scripture into a magical lottery.

These "promises" are expected to manifest a relevance to the immediate needs of the trustful, and where that relevance is not obvious a little mental ingenuity soon invents it.

But such quasi-religious ideas are to be found in the high places of Christianity. More or less modern utterances are to be found, exhibiting an inferior conception of the Divine-human relationship. Self-assertion may be both the blessing and the bane of religious life. Consider, for example, the amazing mixture of the sublime and trustful with the assertive and hectoring in this prayer of Martin Luther: "O Thou, my God! Do Thou, my God, stand by me against all the world's wisdom and reason. Oh, do it! Thou must do it! Yes, Thou above must do it! Not mine, but Thine, is the cause. . . . God, O

God! Dost Thou not hear me, O my God? Art Thou dead? No. Thou canst not die: Thou art only hiding Thyself. Hast Thou chosen me for this work? I ask Thee how I may be sure of this, if it be Thy will; for I would never have thought in all my life, of undertaking aught against such great lords. Stand by me, O God, in the Name of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, who shall be my Defence and Shelter, yea, my Mighty Fortress, through the might and strength of Thy Holy Spirit. God help me. Amen."

One's desire to dominate and defeat others finds ready and frequent expression in prayer. This is exemplified in the tribal-god worship of early man. It recurs in a surprising degree in a clash of nations such as occurred in the Great War. On both sides communal and private supplications arose for victory. Petitions diametrically opposed in content ascended to Him whom the devout of the leading belligerent nations believed to be the God and Father of us all. The intensely narrow patriotism enshrined in many of the war-time prayers was nothing short of a regression to the tribal-god worship of contemporary savage religion. Here, where religion was but a form of worship with patriotic motive, we see the passion of nations crying in an agony for their own self-preservation. So individually, when man's self-assertive impulse cannot, under conditions as they are, receive adequate expression and satisfaction, he enlists on his side the aid of the supernatural. The blind Samson essays to dislodge the pillars of the Philistine banqueting-hall, and cries: "O Lord Jehovah, remember me, I pray Thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." There is something essentially fetishistic in the conception of a god whose aid is reserved, so to speak, for the particular devotee or group to whom he belongs.

This, of course, is an abuse of prayer, as that exercise

is conceived by the loftier thought of civilization. In its highest forms prayer is nothing less than an expressed desire to rise above the limitations of space and time, to escape from the confines of mundane existence, and find in the infinite Beyond that fulness of life and that perfection which in its turn will reveal the essential transitoriness of all evil and all finitude. Prayer is indeed "a wish referred to God." The wish varies in expression, but at root it is a desire for "life more abundantly." This dominant impulse of self-assertion may express itself as a prayer for purely personal goods, or it may be found seeking disinterested goodness, righteousness for its own sake. It may be an impotent shriek against the immensities of nature—"Lord, save me, or I perish!"—or it may be a reverent aspiration after conformity to a Divine standard of righteousness and power—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ."

Prayer is fundamentally an individual matter. Early religion was, as we have seen, always social both in form and content. It made for, and intensified, the solidarity of the clan, the tribe, or the nation, and the way of the individualist was hard. Nevertheless, each individual experienced his own reaction to the powers superhuman and supernatural. The rise of fetishism—which we regard as a decadent reaction against the loss of individuality sustained in social worship—is traceable to the operation of the instincts of self-preservation in the sphere of religion.

Prayer is often intensely anti-social. The Hebrew mind, for example, did not hesitate to attribute to Elijah the power to withhold rain. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months."

In primitive forms of religion, individual totemism is

an established fact, which is clear enough evidence that long before the rise of the great individualistic religions man was conscious of his selfhood before the powers he worshipped. The dominant instincts relating to his own self-preservation were too strong to enable him to find in social worship complete satisfaction of his craving for larger life. It was really intensified individuality he sought, and his self-assertive impulse led him into rebellion against the social sanctions and customs. Man has evolved many types of worship and church economy, ranging from a priestly hierarchy to a priestless democracy, and from State-worship to monasticism. In them all he has been striving to relate and reconcile the egoistic and gregarious impulses in religion.

2. PRAYER AND THE GREGARIOUS INSTINCTS

The natural complement to this aspect of prayer is that which reveals it as a social phenomenon. For although prayer is rooted in individual reaction, it is none the less true that the manner and nature of that reaction are very materially modified by social influence. We pass on, therefore, to regard prayer as it expresses and is conditioned by the gregarious instincts of man.

Reverting to our discussion of the nature of this religious act, we found that it "reflects the forms of human social relationship." So manifest is the close relationship between man's social and religious life that certain thinkers maintain the sociological interpretation of religion as being adequate in itself. Durkheim, for instance, together with his collaborators in "*l'Année Sociologique*," finds that "at bottom the concept of totality, that of society and that of divinity, are very probably only different aspects of the same notion."* This school claims that the only adequate

* "Elementary Forms." See also, for detailed criticism, C. Webb, "Group Theories of Religion."

interpretation of the phenomena of religion is the sociological. Religion is merely *un fait social*, the product of social forces. It is loyalty to the beloved community, and the individualistic elements in it can only be explained in terms of sociology. The powers to which the devout mind addresses itself are only the individualized forms of collective forces. "The only source of life at which we can morally reanimate ourselves is that formed by the society of our fellow-beings" (Durkheim).

That interpretation of religion which finds its origin and sole ground in communal loyalty and which reduces God to an idealized and authoritative society is open to serious objection. In explaining away the personal aspect of religion, it does not pay due regard to the evidence of the individual consciousness. The traditional element in religion is a real and potent factor, but it is by no means the sole element. Much as religious man is influenced by the ideas and sanctions of his social environment, the instincts relating to his own individuality are never wholly dormant, and, as has been indicated, the initial response to the object of religious worship is essentially individual. The sociological interpretation of religious experience leads inevitably to subjectivism as its philosophical background, and is therefore totally inimical to the validity of religion. For reasons which will be elaborated at a later stage, subjectivism, whether associated with the "racial gregariousness" theory of Leuba or with the psychoanalytic projections of the Freudian theory, is philosophically inadequate and psychologically unjustified.

Extremes apart, we find that in prayer, as in all religion, social life has an abiding and a profound significance. In form, in content, and in exercise, prayer reveals the strong influence of the herd-instinct. The liturgical forms of prayer are traditional, and, on the whole, man is most conservative when he is most religious. With the rise of individualism in religion, a growth from the earliest

fetishistic rebellions against the tribal will, prayer becomes less wholly communal, but it never ceases to be predominantly so. Neither does it cease to be highly coloured by social influence. Religious evolution is notoriously slow, owing to this very traditional element, which preserves the idea of God and hands it down from generation to generation.

Our prayers, our vows, we now present
Before Thy throne of grace;
God of our fathers, be the God
Of their succeeding race.

We have traced in the history of prayer a growth from tribal or clan-worship to that of the great universal religions. Throughout the whole of that growth man never ceases to be associated with others of like mind with himself. Prayer, that is, is always a social act, regarded either in the light of its content, or in that of its communal expression, or in both ways. Even when it is most individualistic and solitary it may be most deeply influenced by social forms, and, as we have seen, it reaches its highest tone when prayerful man escapes from the narrow limits of patriotism and views the whole world as having religious significance. "Prayer is thus at the end, what it was at the beginning, the prayer of the community. But whereas at the beginning the community was the narrow and exclusive community of the family or tribe, at the end it is a community which may include all mankind."*

Midway between the weak individualism of the prayers of early men, with their narrow and intense communism, and the great breadth of modern altruistic religion stands the Hebrew Psalmist, who delights in corporate worship—"I will give thanks in the great assembly: I will praise Thee among much people"—but with whom the non-Hebraic is heathen and beyond the favour of Jahweh. At

* F. B. Jevons, "Idea of God," p. 149.

the highest stage of the evolution of prayer stand those great prayers which are individual in exercise but communal in content. Such, for example, is this sublime prayer of Thomas à Kempis: "O merciful Lord, who hast made of one Blood and redeemed by one Ransom all nations of men, let me never harden my heart against any that partake of the same nature and Redemption with me, but grant me an universal Charity towards all men. Give me, O Thou Father of compassions, such a tenderness and meltingness of Heart that I may be deeply affected with all the miseries and calamities, outward or inward, of my Brethren, or diligently keep them in love. Grant that I may not only seek my own things, but also the things of others. O that this mind may be in us all, which was in the Lord Jesus, that we may love as Brethren, be Pitiful and Courteous, and endeavour heartily and vigorously to keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, and the God of Grace, Mercy and Peace be with us all. Amen."

If prayer be thus closely related to the activities of the gregarious instincts, we expect to find in it abundant expression of the forms and relationships of social life. This is manifestly the case. Father-child, master-servant, friend-friend, king-subject, leader-follower, bridegroom-bride, army-captain, these are some of the relationships reflected in the prayers of man. The Christian classic, the great pattern-prayer of Christ, begins with "Our Father," and St. Bernard is using an ancient and a worldwide concept when he cries: "O King of Peace, come and reign in me, for I will have no king but Thee." So, also, the Hebraic idea of a Kinsman-Redeemer, a Go'el, appears frequently in prayer, and the conception of God as Leader, Shepherd, Overlord, is common. When all due allowance has been made for the necessarily anthropomorphic language in which prayer is clothed, it remains conspicuously true that prayerful man does actually conceive of his God in terms of such relationships as have been

mentioned. It is more than mere necessity of language, it is necessity of thought. It is the conception of a real relationship, a real bond.

Looking further at the social character of worship, we find abundant evidence that the gregarious instincts play a great part in creating and fostering that desire for fellowship which characterizes religion. "I have strange glimpses of the power of association," said Carlyle. "Therein lies the true element of religion." The conception of the Church has its origin in small gatherings of religiously minded men who found fellowship in a kindred reaction to external abnormalities. Its earliest expression would most probably be in the natural grouping of family life, and probably the Greek Hestia and the Roman Vesta were originally the goddesses of the family hearth. We trace the working out of the human impulse toward fellowship in the religious combinations of tribe and state, in the esoteric mysteries of Greece and Rome, and in the philosophico-religious coteries of the Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists. In all religious associations there is found in practical operation that conception which owes its birth and inspiration to the herd-instinct of man, the idea of the Ecclesia, the essential unity of those who worship at the same shrine and cherish the same beliefs.

The impulse which leads men to seek fellowship in prayer opens the way for the operation of suggestion. The "group mind" does not exist as a distinct entity. What does exist is a group of individual minds made suggestible by their mutual proximity and their unity of purpose or community of thought. Heightened suggestibility is the invariable outcome of the massing together of people who have certain ideas in common. Desultory or accidental proximity will not produce it, but if a group of people formerly isolated and detached in thought and purpose becomes suddenly inspired by a common idea or sentiment, then what is sometimes called "crowd con-

tagion " becomes demonstrably operative, and every unit of that group becomes acutely suggestible to the prevailing ideas and feelings. Examples are common enough. A city street, thronged by pedestrians more or less unknown to one another and pursuing their respective callings and occupations, becomes the scene of an accident. Immediately the isolated units of that crowd melt into one, and every mind is dominated by one line of thought. Under such circumstances, ideas are accepted with the readiest credulity, and actions performed with the scantiest regard for the dignity and decorum which previously characterized the individual members of the crowd. Every mind is dominated by one idea, and related ideas and feelings are accepted with avidity because of the prevailing suggestibility.

So much has been written on the subject of mass-suggestibility in relation to religion that it is perhaps unnecessary to seek for examples of our own. Many illustrations are given, for instance, in James' "Varieties of Religious Experience" and in Davenport's "Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals." Mention may be made, however, of the more or less modern vogue of "faith-healing." In the great gatherings held in America and the British Isles there have been remarkable scenes of excitement, at times approximating to frenzy. It appears to be a highly emotional, and not altogether salutary, reaction against the somewhat arid intellectualism of modern religion. Under the hypnotic influence of chorus singing, clapping of hands, and rhythmic stamping of feet, men and women make the most extravagant statements as to the physical effects of these "healing" campaigns. At one gigantic gathering attended by the author, a local circuit steward, a man of undoubted integrity and mental balance, submitted to the mesmeric attentions of the "pastor," and amid thundering applause and ejaculations of "Hallelujah!" and similar cries came to the front of

the platform and gave his "testimony," which was to the effect that whereas he was formerly stone-deaf he could now hear very clearly. The following day the writer sought this good man out with a view to discovering what had been his feelings during the previous day's excitement. He was as deaf as ever, and at the time of writing is still deaf.

Now this instance is cited, not so much in criticism of the movement referred to, although it is nauseating and dangerous enough, but to illustrate the extreme effects of crowd-contagion. The victim of this delusion had been reduced to a state of acute suggestibility before ever he was handled and shaken by the leader of the meeting, and he really believed he was cured, because he was pronounced cured "in the name of the Lord."

Communal prayer, whether it be audible or silent, antiphonal or uttered by the priest or minister, in all its forms makes for heightened suggestibility and sensitiveness to the ideas relevant to worship. The minds of the assembled worshippers are focussed upon the one idea of approach to the Divine, and all suggestions relevant to that central and common idea, whether emanating from the officiating minister, from a manual of devotion, from the "dim religious light," or from the storehouse of associated memories—all such suggestions are readily received.

From the psychological standpoint the chief value of united worship lies in this fact of the enhanced receptiveness of the great ideas more or less common to all. The solitary, the recluse, may gain something by detachment from his fellows, but he inevitably loses that valuable element in corporate worship which strengthens and deepens religious belief. The anchorite represses his gregarious instincts, and pays the penalty. His is a mind apart, and therefore a mind abnormal and probably subnormal.

3. PRAYER AND THE SEX-INSTINCT

Of the relation of *the third great dominant instinct—that of sex*—to the subject of prayer, we do not propose to treat at length. The reading of the many volumes purporting to prove the essential dominance of this instinct in matters secular and religious leaves one with the impression that there is little danger of the thinking man—by which is meant the more than usually thoughtful—under-emphasizing the effect of this impulse on human life. Moreover, it would serve but little purpose to cull illustrations of the operation of the sex-instinct from current literature, or even from one's own pastoral experience. The fact of that operation is plain for all to see. Of first importance to the preservation of the race, it is a priori certain that the instincts of reproduction will colour all human activity. Particularly in religion, in art and music, which are universal and natural to man, we expect to find abundant evidence of their presence. We have found reason to regard the instinctive basis of religion as composite, and have concluded that any attempt to found religion on any one instinct exclusively is doomed to failure. For that reason religion is never wholly selfish. Neither can it ever be entirely gregarious. Equally certain is it that religion is never wholly sexual, and is seldom predominantly so. The Freudian claim for the sexual origin of religion is a priori improbable, and a posteriori it is demonstrably inadequate. Granted that certain types of religion run with amazing ease into sexual riot; granted that the terminology of sexual relationship is frequently found in prayer; granted, again, as every parochial minister of religion knows from experience, that the sexual element is always present in religious relationships; granted, indeed, the bulk of the evidence adduced by the German schools and the American eroto-

genesisists, there is still not sufficient foundation for the theory that "all religion in its beginning is a mere mis-interpretation of sex-ecstasy, and the religion of to-day is only the essentially unchanged evolutionary product of psycho-sexual perversion."* As Professor James puts it so trenchantly in his "Varieties of Religious Experience": "It is true that in the vast collection of religious phenomena some are undisguisedly amatory—*e.g.*, sex-deities and obscene rites in polytheism, and ecstatic feelings of union with the Saviour in a few Christian mystics. But then why not equally call religion an aberration of the digestive function, and prove one's point by the worship of Bacchus and Ceres, or by the ecstatic feelings of some other saints about the Eucharist? . . . Language drawn from eating and drinking is probably as common in religious literature as is language drawn from the sexual life. We 'hunger and thirst' after righteousness; we 'find the Lord a sweet savour'; we 'taste and see that He is good.' . . . In fact, one might almost as well interpret religion as a perversion of the respiratory function. The Bible is full of the language of respiratory oppression—'Hide not thine ear at my breathing' . . . 'my heart panteth,' etc."

We believe that the eroto-genistic theory fails, since it does not and cannot do justice to the other instincts dominant in human nature. Further, there is a manifest difference between the religious consciousness, as such, and the sexual consciousness, as such. "The object of Divine love is not sensuous or transitory, but spiritual and abiding. Precious as is the love of persons for its own sake, it is a symbol of that which is higher."† The religious sentiment is distinct in motive from the sexual sentiment, a fact which is illustrated by the general univer-

* Schroeder, quoted Thouless, "Introd. to the Psychology of Religion," p. 128.

† Dr. Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," p. 300.

salinity of religious sanctions in regard to sex. Where the language of human love is found in prayer—and it frequently occurs—there may be traced in some part the influence of the instinct of sex. In the abnormalities of mysticism this is more conspicuous. But in the expression of normal religious experience such verbal forms are often nothing more than religious language clothing itself in the richest symbols afforded by human relationship.

On the whole subject of the instinctive bases of religion we are thus led to the conclusion that no one instinct or group of instincts is universally dominant in prayer. We have found sufficient evidence amply to establish the fact of an instinctive basis. But such basis is composite. In the religious life, each of the three dominant groups of instincts has its place, and in no form of that life is it true to say that one such group of impulses operates exclusively. The instincts relating to the ego, the herd, and the sex severally condition the form and content of religion with varying and characteristic force. In "healthy minded" religion, no one of the great instincts will deprive the others of their reasonable power. In pathological states, religion may be selfish, sexual, or hyper-social. It appears, then, that while we may not speak of a "religious instinct," we are compelled to recognize the existence of a religious sentiment—*i.e.*, "an organized system of emotional tendencies."* Man's emotional dispositions have become organized in a system around specific religious objects or a specific religious object.

It remains to add that the lowly origin or basis of prayer has no decisive bearing upon the question of its validity. The instinctive in prayer is but a mark of its close relationship with the normal in human nature. It is evidently native to man, and as such is primitive and instinctive at root. "Thus the development of prayer can

* McDougall, "Social Psychology," following Shand.

be observed, though not explained, in a biological sense; complete historic continuity can be established between the first glimmer of religious awe in primitive man and the blaze of 'absolute feeling' in the saint. All along the path uniting these two extremes we can see the emergent human instinct for God."*

* Evelyn Underhill, "Man and the Supernatural," p. 193.

CHAPTER VII

PRAYER AND SUGGESTION

THE consideration of prayer as influenced by, and as expressing, the dominant instincts of man leads up naturally to the subject of this chapter. In particular, we had occasion to notice that in relation to the gregarious instincts the study of the processes of suggestion is of great importance for the understanding of communal worship and congregational prayer.

Modern interest in the subject of mental influence has a long history behind it. At a very early stage in man's development the fact of the dominance of strong personalities would be established, and any sign which indicated the will of the acknowledged leader of the tribe or clan would be charged with imperative potency. Primitive man was suggestible, in a peculiar degree, since, as we have seen, the rational factor in his consciousness was but little developed. Psychic influence was not limited in occasion to personal contact. The primitive mind, in its crude conception of causal connection, looked for the cause of man's domestic and personal troubles, and found it in the influence of spiritual entities, human, sub-human, and super-human. Not the least potent of these influences was that of malignant and antagonistic human spirits. By magic man could project his evil desires on to his enemy and so wreak vengeance without himself appearing.

The investigation of the nature and strength of this peculiar phase of the belief in human influence would lead us into the discussion of witchcraft in general, for that is often little more than the exercise of powerful sug-

gestion upon the childlike and impressionable mind of the savage. But such a discussion, although perhaps wholly irrelevant to the subject of prayer, would unduly prolong what is merely an introduction to the examination of modern psychological theory. Suffice it to note that man's belief in the efficacy of magic is invariably related to, and often constituted by, his crude and ill-defined belief in the influence of human mind or spirit.

The doctrine of the "magnetic fluid" radiating from certain gifted men dates back to F. A. Mesmer, the physician of Vienna, and beyond him to J. B. Van Helmont (sixteenth century), and the Irishman Valentine Greatrakes (seventeenth century), and J. J. Gassner, the Swabian Roman Catholic exorcist of the middle eighteenth century. This doctrine of "animal magnetism" held sway until the middle of last century, and until James Braid published his "Neuryphology" in 1843 and confirmed the conclusions of the French physician, Alexandre Bertrand, published twenty years earlier ("Traité du Somnambulisme"), all mesmerists accepted the doctrine of the transference from the operator to the subject of a mysterious physical influence. It was left to Bertrand and Braid to discover that the doctrine of the magnetic fluid was mistaken conjecture, and that the secret of the effects produced lay in the operation of the patient's own mind over his organism, the mind being led to operate by the suggestions of the physician. "Braidism," however, did not come into its own until the end of the nineteenth century, when Professor H. Bernheim of Nancy reasserted the truth in his "De la Suggestion" (1884).

What Bernheim called "suggestion" was, therefore, established as the process by which certain conditions are created in the mind of the patient or subject, conditions favourable to the unreasoned acceptance of propositions

which may or may not lead to appropriate action. In the psychological theory of what has been called the New Psychology the study of suggestion occupies a prominent place, for the fact of suggestion is the foundation of all modern psycho-therapeutics.

Since the use of the word to denote the presentation of an idea through association has been abandoned by modern psychologists, it is possible to define suggestion with less fear of ambiguity. Its essence is, as William McDougall says, "the alogical production of conviction."* All writers are agreed upon the non-rational character of the process from the side of the subject. There are differences, however, in the definition of what is communicated in the act of suggestion, and there are diverse theories held as to the real cause of suggestibility. With Professor McDougall, suggestion is "a process of communication resulting in the acceptance with conviction of the communicated proposition in the absence of logically adequate grounds for its acceptance,"† which is repeated in substance in his article on Suggestion in the "Encyclopedia Britannica." With this agrees Tansley's definition of suggestion as "the acceptance by the mind of a proposition independently of the rational faculty."‡

Thouless§ rightly protests against the exclusion from the study of suggestion of those cases where what is communicated is not a proposition but a feeling-state or a course of action. He defines suggestion as "a process of communication resulting in the acceptance and realization of a communicated idea in the absence of adequate grounds for its acceptance," a definition which would be more explicit if the word "logically" were inserted before

* "Encyclopedia Britannica," vol. xxvi., p. 49.

† "Social Psychology," p. 97.

‡ "New Psychology," p. 301.

§ "Psychology of Religion," p. 19; "Social Psychology," p. 168.

“adequate.” McDougall distinguishes from suggestion, which he describes as a cognitive process, the sympathetic introduction of the emotions, which he terms Sympathy, and the assimilation of the bodily movements, which he terms Imitation. It is difficult to maintain this limited connotation, since the cognitive, volitional, and affective factors are never singly operative in any mental process. The presence of one of these elements is, as has already been pointed out, always attended by that of others in greater or less degree, and any attempt to draw decisive lines of demarcation between Suggestion, Sympathy, and Imitation will lead to an arbitrary selection which it is difficult to maintain and hard to justify. We prefer, therefore, to speak of the cognitive, volitional, and affective aspects of Suggestion, a process in which under these several aspects is communicated idea, impulse to action, or emotion. The two last-named may be described, for the sake of convenience, as the mimetic and sympathetic aspects of suggestion respectively.

In his “Suggestion and Auto-suggestion,” Charles Baudouin defines suggestion as “the subconscious realization of an idea.” It is “the putting into operation, by ourselves or by another, of the ideo-reflex power which exists in us all.”* In accordance with this definition he reduces all suggestion to auto-suggestion. Even when the origin of the suggestion is external, the only feature distinguishing it from auto-suggestion proper is the fact that the idea is communicated from a source external to the mind of the subject, and the process is not, therefore, wholly intra-mental. We shall return a little later to the consideration of this interesting view.

There are many degrees and varieties of suggestion. They range from deep hypnosis to the mild suggestions associated with the affairs of everyday life; from the operations of professional psycho-therapists to the sug-

* P. 26.

gestions relevant to commercial psychology. Common to all types is the more or less uncritical acceptance and realization of an idea or proposition, attended by varying degrees of consciousness; the entering the mind of an idea or intimation possessing significance for consciousness, which entrance is effected in the partial or complete suspension of the rational factor.

What is the basic nature of suggestion? Perhaps no positive and completely satisfying answer has been given. While, however, we may agree that there is insufficient evidence to support Dr. S. Ferenczi's attempt to find the explanation of suggestion in the theory of the Œdipus complex or Freud's latest attempt to define suggestibility as an emotional attitude acquired by the race through the fixation of repressed libido upon the primal herd-leader—re-animation of anatavistic survival; and while, further, we may dismiss as unproven Professor Janet's claim that suggestion is the "evocation of automatisms," we cannot so easily dispose of the theory that suggestibility has an historic and causal connection with the social relationships of man. Trotter and McDougall are at one in looking in that direction for the explanation of suggestibility, although the former finds it in the gregarious instinct proper and the latter invokes the "submissive instinct" as distinct from, though closely related to, the gregarious. Thus, for W. H. R. Rivers, suggestion is "a term for the mechanism of the unconscious, for that aspect of the gregarious instinct whereby the mind of one member of a group of animals or human beings acts upon another or others unwittingly, to produce in both or all a common content, or a content so similar that both or all act with complete harmony towards some common end."*

Probably enough has now been said to indicate the essential universality of Suggestion and the consequent

* "Instinct and the Unconscious," p. 94.

difficulty of arriving at a concise and adequate definition of this phenomenon. Made too broad in its scope, Suggestion becomes merely a synonym for mental stimulus. Made too narrow, the definition arbitrarily excludes much of human experience which should find a place in its compass. For the purposes of this essay, therefore, we shall define Suggestion as *a process whereby the mind is constrained to accept a proposition or act upon a stimulus in the absence of rationally adequate grounds for so doing*. Such a definition, simple as it is, will serve our purposes because the saving clause, "or . . . stimulus," avoids the error of which Thouless complains—viz., that of limiting the concept to its cognitive aspect—and the use of the word "acceptance" instead of "communication" leaves adequate room for the inclusion of auto-suggestion in our study.

It would be easy to multiply examples illustrative of the operation of Suggestion in human experience. The so-called normal life of the average man affords many an example. There are rich mines of illustrative matter in the leading writings on the New Psychology, and once the real nature of Suggestion has been understood, life appears prolific in illustrations. It would be most profitable and helpful, for instance, to investigate some of the more interesting examples of the use of Suggestion in psycho-therapeutics, but that would make for a long delay in reaching the heart of our subject.

(A) We proceed, therefore, to notice *the general significance of Suggestion for Prayer*. Undoubtedly it plays a great part, not only in the fostering of religious growth generally and in the strengthening of communal religious bonds, but it is also remarkably manifest in the specific forms of cultus under which the religious spirit expresses itself. Public worship, for example, is calculated to increase very materially the suggestibility of the worshipper. A very potent factor is provided by the consciousness of

each worshipper that he is one of a number; herd-suggestion operates very strongly in religious as in political and similar gatherings. The normal accompaniments of religious worship are conducive to heightened suggestibility. For the savage the beating of the tom-tom, the weird dances and personal decorations, the flickering torches, the chanting of the priests or medicine-men; for civilized men the dim religious light, the chanting of the great religious classics, the distinctive apparel worn by the officiating minister, the intonations, the united murmuring of set forms of prayer—these manifestly possess great psychological significance and serve so to increase the suggestibility of the worshipper that the religious ideas associated with the service are readily accepted or easily revived.

In particular, the act of prayer is of special interest to those who study the phenomena of religion from the psychological standpoint. For in what does that act consist? It is regarded by religious man as real intercourse with a Being or beings conceived as objectively existent, superior, and responsive. In such intercourse devout man not only offers his petitions and praises to his God, he also claims to receive communications and revelations from Him.

Consider the attitude of mind involved in supplication. In this there are involved all those features conducive to the successful operation of the process of suggestion.

(a) *Confession of superiority* is, as we have seen, an indispensable pre-requisite to prayer. God has power to give all I need if only I am humble, submissive, and receptive. All known sin must be repudiated, all doubts as to God's power must be silenced, and all irrelevant thoughts banished. In holy concentration and humble dependence I must make my requests known unto Him. In all forms of real prayer, as has been shown in a previous chapter, there is operative a more or less clearly

defined recognition or attribution of superiority or comparative greatness to the object of worship. Man does not pray to his inferior. Where he conceives himself as able to coerce the deity, his address is imperative and not optative, and his relationship with such a being is more magical than religious, while his utterances partake more of the nature of spell than of prayer.

The prayer-relationship, then, presupposes a certain *prestige* attributed to the object of worship. On the human side there is the necessary complement to that attribution—viz., the attitude of submission and deference.

(b) The second characteristic of prayer discoverable by psychological analysis is *recognition of the mystery surrounding the object of adoration or reverence*. Prayerful man is ignorant. He knows not what is best for him. "Thy will be done" is the implicit or articulate supplement to all his petitions. Assured he may be of the friendliness of the Power to whom he addresses his petition, yet the purposes of that Power are inscrutable and shrouded in mystery. How little of the future is known to man! How uncertain his life and all its content. Early man is ignorant of the nature of those forces which appear other and greater than he, deeply mysterious, at times friendly, and at times hostile. His prayer is an appeal to the Awful and Beyond, of which he knows so little, yet of whose immanence he is so acutely aware. As soon as man begins to philosophize, as soon, that is, as the exigencies of life leave him leisure for thought, he systematizes and explains his religious experiences, and there arise systems of theology and theodicy, crude or refined, according to the age of their production. At all stages of his development, however, prayerful man has been oppressed by a sense of the limitation of his knowledge of the Supernatural, and this very consciousness has made for greater urgency in his petitions. "More

light!" cried the dying Goethe, and such has ever been the universal cry of religious man.

Interpreted according to the various stages of human culture and in the light of religious conceptions differing widely, yet fundamentally one, the great words of Tennyson gives striking expression to the fact of man's conscious ignorance:

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And Thou hast made him : Thou art just.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of Thee.
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness; let it grow.

(c) The third distinguishing mark of the prayer-act, viewed in the light of Suggestion, is that of *faith or trust*, an attitude or disposition in which is manifest that attribution of value to the Unseen, a value without which the suppliant feels deprived of moral harmony and balance. Truth, beauty, and goodness, so far as the mind is able to appreciate them, are attributed to the Supernatural by prayerful man. Upon this conception he bases his all-important belief in the friendliness and approachability of his God or gods, and upon that, in turn, he founds his hope and plea for benefits material and spiritual. Religious man, it must be added, seldom reasons in any such elaborate way. For him prayer is the spontaneous response to a native impulse, and only when he philosophizes about his religious experience or others philoso-

phize for him does the faith presupposed by his prayer become revealed by analysis.

By faith in the ultimate goodness and friendliness of the object or objects of worship is established that sense of *rapport* so essential to confident worship. There exists between the worshipper and his God a relationship of such a character that his approach is acceptable and his prayers considered with favour. This is true, of course, of all prayer, crude or refined, but in particular mystics of all religions and ages have claimed to experience and enjoy that harmony, and systems of spiritual discipline have been evolved whereby all the faithful may enter into a deepening intimacy with the spirit-world.

How great a part in the religious history of man has been played by this yearning for harmonious relationship in worship is seen in the many and various rites of purification, sacrifice, and atonement. Sacrifice is often bribery, naked and unashamed, or what is, perhaps, not vitally different, it is offered on the principle of *Do ut des*. "We offer thee this sacrifice," say the Iroquois, when sacrificing a human victim, "in order that thou mayest nourish thyself in human flesh and that thou wilt, in consequence, give us good fortune and victory over our enemies."

There is, however, a class of sacrifice of a definitely propitiatory character. The shedding of blood appeases the Divine wrath, a conception seen in revolting form in the hideous Canaanitish sacrifices of children to Moloch. The mystery religions embody elaborate rites of initiation and purification. There occur at once to the mind the famous Greek and Mithraic mysteries—the Mithraic rites which were so similar to those of early Christianity that the Fathers suspected Satanic counterfeit, and the Eleusinian mysteries which showed the initiate the terrors of Hades and the beauties of Elysium. The ceremonial use of water for purification is both ancient and modern, and is

prominent in both savage and civilized communities. The proselyte baptism of the Jews, the *lustratio* of the Romans, the baptism of sections of the Christian Church, are familiar examples of the organized efforts of man to purge away all moral dross and uncleanness that he may be fit for fellowship with the Divine.

(d) A further factor of psychological interest is *the frequency with which prayer becomes a communal exercise*. Generally speaking, religious man delights to associate with his fellows, provided they be of kindred mind. As has been indicated in an earlier chapter, the religion of primitive man is essentially tribal, and only as the so-called universal religions arise does a predominant element of individuality enter into religious acts and conceptions. It would be obviously untrue, however, to say that the rise of religious individuality means the decay of religious social institutions. The reverse is the case. The modern religious devotee, recluses excepted, considers himself as enjoying an individual relationship with his God, but none knows better than he the comfort and inspiration derived from regular association with others of like persuasion. Something has been said in an earlier chapter on the importance of the herd-instinct in relation to prayer. Mass gatherings make for the increased suggestibility of the individual, and that if there do emanate suggestions of strength and courage, of guidance, correction, and encouragement from a sphere other than the human, then man would be better fitted to receive such suggestions if he were meeting with others of like expectancy and faith.

(e) Further, in dealing with so universal a phenomenon as Prayer, it is in the highest degree probable that we are concerned with an attitude to life and a manner of thought and feeling having at their base one or more of the dominant instincts. We have answered in the negative the question as to the existence of a specific religious

instinct. Most psychologists, religious as well as non-religious, find such a postulate superfluous, and are able to detect in religion the normal and abnormal operations of the cardinal instincts of man. However, none will deny that religion is predominantly instinctive. Even if it be at root nothing more than fear, which few would assert, it is instinctive; and if it be the exercise of a noble desire to attain communion with a Being conceived of as embodying all the perfections conceivable by man, it is not difficult to analyze such an effort into its instinctive foundations. Since the introduction and authentication of the evolutionary hypothesis, religious writers have been less diffident in speaking of the human instincts in connection with religion. In this field, as in others, it has been realized that no human excellencies are invalidated by their lowly origin.

Prayer, especially, is instinctive at its root. In all its forms, from the rude cries of the savage to the majestic litanies of the great religions, it is, at bottom, a spontaneous reaction to the universe—a reaction which, let it be said, is probably as true to reality and as native to human nature as the impulses and actions attributable to, say, the instinct of pugnacity or that of flight or nutrition.

We have noticed, then, in a somewhat cursory analysis of the mental processes and dispositions presupposed in the act of prayer, that there are certain well-defined factors present—viz., (*a*) confession of superiority, submission, and reverence; (*b*) consciousness of ignorance; (*c*) trust in the goodness and magnanimity of the spirit-powers; and (*d*) predominant sociability and a striving after harmonious fellowship with those powers, the whole act being (*e*) more or less manifestly instinctive at its root. The question may now be raised and answered—What light is thrown upon Prayer, thus analyzed, by the psychological concept of *Hetero-suggestion*?

(B) *Prayer and Hetero-suggestion*.—First of all, what is suggestibility, and what are the conditions of increased suggestibility? According to Ferenczi, suggestibility is “nothing more than the survival in the unconscious of the child’s readiness to believe blindly and obey uncritically those whom it loves.” We may accept a theory of the gregarious origin of individual, as well as of mass, suggestibility without committing ourselves to the Freudian extremes propounded by Ferenczi. Undoubtedly, if there be inherent in a unit of the human race a native susceptibility to suggestion, that suggestibility is fostered by the necessary dependencies of childhood. But its origin is most probably racial and not individual. The theory of the gregarious origin of suggestibility is simple, and is true to the general demands of the evolutionary hypothesis. The well-being of the herd depends upon its responsiveness to the fear or anger experienced by one or more of its members. The instinctive foundation of this mass-responsiveness may probably be analyzable into more than one element, as McDougall, for example, suggests. Of that question more adequate treatment can be deferred to a later chapter.

Coming now to a more relevant question, and one, incidentally, easier to answer, we may enquire into the necessary conditions of suggestibility. What are the conditions most favourable to successful suggestion? It is obvious that suggestibility in itself is not necessarily a mark of abnormality. It is a universal and normal condition, which only becomes abnormal in its extreme forms, as in hypnosis, hysteria, fatigue, or insanity. As against the view of Professor Pierre Janet that all hypnotizable persons are hysterical, it has been successfully maintained that more than 90 per cent. of the subjects treated by leading psychologists are hypnotizable, while but a small percentage could be called hysterical. Suggestibility, of which hypnosis is an increased and prolonged

form, is not necessarily a morbid symptom, and suggestion cannot be restricted to hysterical subjects only.

According to McDougall, "Greater degrees of suggestibility are due in the main to conditions of four kinds—(1) Abnormal states of the brain, of which the relative dissociation obtaining in hysteria, hypnosis, normal sleep, and fatigue, is the most important; (2) deficiency of knowledge or convictions relating to the topic in regard to which the suggestion is made, and imperfect organization of knowledge; (3) the impressive character of the source from which the suggested proposition is communicated; (4) peculiarities of the character and native disposition of the subject."* To this list he adds† a condition favouring suggestion from the side of the agent, mass-suggestion.

It is not difficult to see that in this excellent summary are included several features corresponding to points in our analysis of the prayer-state. In connection with the theme of this essay, "abnormal states of the brain" may be said to obtain only in exceptional cases, such as that of extreme mysticism or that of the religious hysteria so common to revival movements. Not that mysticism in itself is necessarily extreme. The reference is to those ecstatic and exceptional states described, for instance, in St. Teresa's "Interior Castle" or in the statements of Sadhu Sundar Singh and such as are deliberately and systematically invoked in the *Dharana* of Yoga practice. Nor must the expression "revival movements" be used indiscriminately. There is, of course, a certain measure of mental abnormality in all movements involving a quickening of the emotions and a consequent inhibiting of the critical "faculty." In particular, however, "abnormal states of the brain" are induced in such mass-movements as those initiated and conducted by the

* "Social Psychology," p. 98.

† "Encyclopedia Britannica," vol. xxvi., p. 49.

American revivalist, Billy Sunday, when amazing manifestations of hysteria were witnessed. In such movements, comparatively frequent in the religious history of New England, there can be little doubt that what is displayed is a widespread revival of primitive traits, a demonstration of the survival of those crude religious emotions peculiar to the savage state.

Now it is apparent that while probably the majority of religious men cannot be called mystics without attaching a very broad and comparatively useless meaning to the term, it is in the mystic state properly so-called that we meet the crux of the problem of prayer. There, if anywhere, we have real communion with the Divine. If we fail to find in the experience of the mystic adequate reason, psychologically, to credit his general claim to enjoy such communion, then we may well despair of discovering it anywhere. If, on the other hand, we find that after making due allowance for the variability and local colouring of the non-essentials, there is in all mysticism of every age and clime a core of common conviction and a universal consent as to the indispensable conditions of successful prayer, and if, further, the mystic state bears definite marks of resemblance to those well-defined mental conditions familiar to the student of psycho-therapy, wherein suggestions from a given quarter are readily received and acted upon, then the outcome of our investigation will, in all probability, be the conviction that there is nothing in the general mental conditions accompanying prayer inconsistent with the claim that what is experienced is real intercourse with an objectively existent Being. Since, therefore, a fuller notice of the mystic state is inevitable in a study of Suggestion in Prayer, we must return later to that aspect of the subject.

In regard to McDougall's second condition of suggestibility—viz., deficiency of knowledge—reference has been made to religious man's consciousness of his ignor-

ance in face of the Divine mysteries. The fact that he is so consciously, and often painfully, ignorant of the nature and the will of the intangible, spiritual reality who is the focus of his prayers and aspirations makes devout man less critical of revelations and suggestions purporting to come from that quarter.

The third point is that of prestige. Here, again, sufficient has been said to show its correspondence to our own analysis of the essential conditions of prayer.

It is essential to remember, however, that for successful hetero-suggestion prestige in itself is not sufficient. It must be prestige of such a character that it is linked to a sympathetic *rapport* between operator and subject. Apart from confidence and trust on the part of the subject, and the submission, docility, and hope which that inspires, mere prestige may defeat its own ends by inducing the inhibitions of fear. This consideration, an axiom in practical psycho-therapeutics, brings us again very close to the foregoing analysis of the prayer-state. In that state, we have seen, faith in the ultimate friendliness of the deity plays a great and indispensable part. Prayerful man has no peace of mind or religious assurance until he has established an effective *rapport* between himself and his God.

McDougall's fourth condition, that of "the native disposition of the subject," is equally relevant to prayer. Man, we have seen reason to aver, is naturally religious. He is instinctively prayerful, for his psychic constitution impels him to pray and to worship, a fact to which adequate testimony is borne by the universality and antiquity of the rite. "We hear in these days of scientific enlightenment a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer," says William James in an oft-quoted paragraph, "and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, whilst others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we do pray. . . . The

reason why we do pray is simply that we cannot help praying." The universality of prayer, upon the fact of which we insisted in our chapter on the Nature of Prayer, is a most remarkable phenomenon, pointing clearly to the instinctive character of religion. The great illogicality of Buddhism is its extensive and devout practice of prayer, for theoretically Buddhism has no God to whom prayer may be addressed. Equally illustrative of the naturalness of prayer is the deification of Confucius, himself not given to prayer, and the consequent prayerful adoration by the millions of his followers.

It will be observed that to McDougall's fifth point—viz., that of "mass suggestion"—all that we have said regarding the social aspect of prayer is relevant. Religion is essentially a social phenomenon, and prayer is, therefore, frequently a communal exercise. Generally speaking, it is conspicuously true that man finds greater good in prayer when he realizes that he is not alone in seeking after his God, if haply he may find Him.

The conclusion, therefore, to which the above considerations lead is that in the psychological presuppositions of the act of prayer are found precisely those elements confessedly conducive to successful hetero-suggestion. It is clear that the suppliant adopts towards the Being or beings conceived as existent and responsive an attitude of enhanced receptivity. Prayer in all its forms involves self-induced suggestibility. From the side of the worshipper, at least, it may be confidently averred that there are present in the act of prayer all those psychological conditions demonstrably favourable to the reception of suggestions from an external source. Whether quiescent or voluble, civilized or savage, prayer is discovered by psychological analysis to be the expression of a nature peculiarly susceptible to external influence. More than that cannot be said, on psychological grounds. It is none the less important, however, to have established the fact of the

essential conformity of the mental factors involved in religious exercises to the conditions requisite to all successful hetero-suggestion.

The theory of thought-transference, or telepathy, is receiving increasing attention from those engaged in psychical research. Whatever truth there may be in the theory—and it already has the consent of many able minds—it will prove to have a very real bearing on the subject of prayer. It will do much to explain religious “atmosphere,” and will account for much of the success of intercessory prayer. From the Christian standpoint, however, telepathy can never be other than a process subsidiary to the operation of the Eternal Spirit. The reduction of intercessory prayer solely to the individualistic radiation of telepathic “waves” of spiritual energy is a reversion to magical theory, or at the best is a resolving of prayer into an applied science. The theory, as a thoroughgoing explanation of intercessory prayer, communal or individual, is poor and inadequate compared with the doctrine of the immanence of a transcendent God, whose Spirit intercedes with and for that of man. Telepathy may eventually become recognized as a normal mental process and its truth established beyond question. In which case further light will be thrown upon the relation of spiritual communion to psychical processes.

As is now well known, there are distinguished several types of suggestion, notably auto-suggestion, hetero-suggestion, and, by some authorities, contra-suggestion. The last-named, by which is meant the process by which certain minds are led to accept the opposite of a presented proposition, has little to do with the study of prayer. It may well be that some of the many minor sects associated with the great religions owe their origin to the excessive contra-suggestibility of their founders in relation to the commonly accepted tenets of their day. That, however, has no vital relationship to our theme.

(C) *Prayer and Auto-suggestion*.—We pass on, therefore, to discover what light is thrown on the subject of prayer by the study of auto-suggestion. This latter process is, as the name implies, self-suggestion, the realization of an idea which has originated in the mind itself and is thus distinguished from hetero-suggestion, wherein the suggested idea originates from a source external to the mind. Renewed prominence has been given to the importance of auto-suggestion as a factor in mental life by the therapeutic practice and the published works of the Nancy school of psychologists. Charles Baudouin, in his “Suggestion and Auto-suggestion,” has described the practice and expounded the doctrine of Émile Coué, who “discovered in auto-suggestion the powerful and widely diffused force of which hypnotic suggestion, the only form of suggestion hitherto studied in medicine, is but one among many applications.” Undoubtedly the late M. Coué obtained some remarkable results. He was concerned more with practice than with theory—he wrote very little—and the most detailed exposition of his work is contained in Baudouin’s book.

In brief, the theory of the Nancy school is that the fundamental process in all suggestion is auto-suggestion. Hetero-suggestion may be used in the initial stages of psycho-therapeutic treatment, but only with a view to initiating the patient into the nature of the new method and setting him on the right road. According to Baudouin, the essential and characteristic element in the process of suggestion is the realization of an idea, and not its acceptance from the mind of another. This realization is effected by subconscious activity, the essential characteristic of the process being the subject’s unawareness of it. Hetero-suggestion is defined, therefore, as induced suggestion, the process whereby the induced idea is given a sufficient intensity to make auto-suggestion possible. Induced suggestion is merely “the education of the subject’s

power of auto-suggestion." The basis of this theory is the conception of suggestion, already noted, as "the subconscious realization of an idea," or, again, as "the putting into operation, by ourselves or another, of the ideo-reflex power which exists in us all."

Baudouin's treatise may be said to be a valuable contribution to the investigation of the mental states involved in the various processes of suggestion. It contains, however, features not free from objection. The value of Baudouin's treatment lies in its emphasis on the necessary co-operation of the mind of the subject in any successful process of suggestion. In that, of course, he is placing new emphasis on the Copernican postulate of Braid, Bertrand, and Bernheim—viz., that suggestion could not be adequately explained without reference to the co-operating activity of the mind of the patient or subject. The weakness of his contribution lies in his unscientific and exclusive concentration on the subjective aspect of suggestion and in the doubtful antithesis he attributes to Imagination and Will. The effect of suggestion depends in great measure on the essential energy liberated by the subject, but that is by no means equivalent to the doctrine that all suggestion is essentially auto-suggestion. The "subconscious realization of an idea," to use the phraseology of the Nancy school, is a process which follows all successful hetero-suggestion, and the protagonists of this school are but emphasizing one-half of that truth at the expense of the other when they minimize the importance and psychotherapeutic value of hetero-suggestion.

So conspicuously operative are external elements in many cases of so-called pure auto-suggestion that it would seem more justifiable to regard hetero-suggestion as the more important process and the external stimulus as the all-important element. On the most superficial investigation it is manifest that M. Coué relied a great deal upon what is usually termed hetero-suggestion. The descrip-

tion of his clinic, for example, in "The Practice of Auto-suggestion," by C. Harry Brooks, shows the operation of "prestige suggestion" from the very beginning of the consultation. However much the fact may be disguised in the terminology peculiar to the Nancy school, it is nevertheless patent that the hopes of the sufferer are, and continue to be, centred upon M. Coué, and that from him the patient is receiving suggestions of strength both during and subsequent to the consultation.

The truth is, of course, that suggestion is a process which may involve varying degrees of mental activity on the part of the patient. It is probably impossible to find a case where that process is wholly intra-mental—that is, a case of pure auto-suggestion—and it is certainly improbable that hetero-suggestion can be effective without the co-operative activity of the mind receiving the suggestion. Auto-suggestion is, therefore, a relative term, and must be understood as applicable to those cases of suggestion where there is no external agent directly responsible for the communication of the realized idea.

If the gregarious origin of suggestibility be accepted, it follows that auto-suggestion has a racial significance, and is primarily derivable from herd-suggestion. That there need be no difficulty in applying this conception to the facts of human social life and its reproduction in the individual life of the members of the community is clear from the conspicuous manner in which all our thinking is ordinarily coloured by social forms and sanctions. As the personality, the doctrines, and the phraseology of M. Coué dominated the so-called auto-suggestions of his patients, so all our thought bears the inevitable imprint of external forms and influences. Which leads us again to the consideration that there is no such thing as pure auto-suggestion. This remains true when special efforts are made to realize particular ideas which commend themselves as contributory to individual balance and efficiency—such efforts,

for instance, as are recommended and defined by Baudouin. If suggestibility, then, has a gregarious origin, auto-suggestion is probably the reproduction by the aid of memory and imagination of the initiations of the leader of the herd. The response of the individual to such leading is shared and stimulated by the rest of the herd, so that there may be said to operate both individual and mass suggestion.

Auto-suggestion, then, is a *relative* term used to denote that variety of suggestion in which is predominant the operation of intra-mental processes only indirectly initiated and affected by external elements.

We now have to face the problem of the relationship between this common action of the mind and the mental states involved in prayer. *Can prayer be reduced to auto-suggestion?* "Whoso rises from his knees a better man, his prayer is answered." Is that the whole effect of prayer? It will be noticed that we are concerned at this point with another aspect of the problem of the alleged subjectivity of religious experience.

Auto-suggestion is never "pure"—that is, can never operate absolutely and without the influence, in substance and form, of external factors. No man lives to himself. He is inevitably and inescapably a social being. When, therefore, we consider whether or not prayer is auto-suggestion, we are not really called upon to answer the question, Is prayer purely subjective? but rather, since the attitude of prayer is such as to make auto-suggestion easy and possible, are there adequate considerations which contradict the view that the religious act in question is auto-suggestion and nothing more?

In the first place, let it be admitted that auto-suggestion does play a great part in the religious thought of the individual. That is to say, let it be granted that in this respect religious thought does not differ radically from secular thought, so-called. What follows? Of evidential

value to the opponent of religion, nothing. The mental processes involved in religion are obviously the same as those active in ordinary life. As we proceed with our examination of prayer in the light of the modern psychological concept of auto-suggestion, it will become increasingly apparent that prayer involves no necessary mental abnormality, and we shall be led to the conclusion that this religious act obeys the laws of the mind as do all other forms of human mental activity, and is therefore not invalidated by its correspondence to those forms. If it be objected that this is nothing more than a defensive line of argument, and that nothing can be adduced thereby to substantiate the religious man's claim for the objectivity of his worship, we reply, first, that psychology ceases to be such when it discourses on ontological probabilities; and, second, if we can show that there is nothing in the nature of religious thought which renders it improbable that it has reference to an objective reality, then we have rendered no mean service to those who tread another path and argue for the existence of God on the ground of necessary value and moral demand.

R. H. Thouless has shown very clearly, in his "Psychology of Religion," the relationship between the mental states distinguished by Professor Baudouin and those found in Christian prayer. The states denoted by Baudouin as *Le Receuillement*, *La Contention*, and *La Concentration*, find their parallel in Roman Catholic prayer in such acts as the recitation of the Rosary. We do not need, however, to follow Thouless into that particular field of religious psychology, fruitful as it is in illustrative matter. It will serve our purpose to show that prayer in general presupposes an attitude of mind conducive to auto-suggestion, and we may then pass on to note how conspicuously this is true of the mystic exercises embodied in the greater religions.

Even a perfunctory analysis of the mental state or states

involved in sincere prayer—prayer, that is, which is something more than mechanical repetition of prescribed formulæ—will reveal several outstanding features—viz., strong emotional tone, a focussing of the attention upon the object of worship, the attendant inhibition of discordant elements, voluntary effort of varying intensity, and the articulation, verbally or in thought only, of definite desires. Here, it is manifest, is a mental state wherein could operate with a minimum of difficulty the process known as auto-suggestion, provided, that is, the “voluntary effort” is not of such an intensity as to render such a process improbable. For auto-suggestion, it is said, can only operate when the mind is free from stress such as is involved in an intense effort to concentrate on a given subject in the midst of distracting claims. Where, therefore, the prayerful spirit articulates its desires to the accompaniment of determined concentration upon the substance of those desires and upon the Being to whom prayer is addressed; where, in a word, there is evident in supplication or adoration an element of volitional and emotional strain, it is highly improbable that auto-suggestion can be said to be operative to any appreciable extent.

Now it is manifest that a good deal of earnest and sincere prayer cannot enter into a discussion of auto-suggestion. “I am weary with my crying; my throat is dried; mine eyes fail while I wait for my God,” cried the Psalmist. That type of prayer, at least, is not free from strain. “Is it true,” asks Canon Liddon, “that prayer is, as is assumed, little else than the half-passive play of sentiment which flows languidly on through the minutes or hours of easy reverie? Let those who have really prayed give the answer. They sometimes describe prayer with the patriarch Jacob as a wrestling together with an Unseen Power which may last, not unfrequently in an earnest life, late into the night hours or even to the break of day. Sometimes they refer

to common intercession with St. Paul as a concerted struggle. They have, when praying, their eyes fixed on the Great Intercessor in Gethsemane, upon the drops of blood which fall to the ground in that agony of resignation and sacrifice. *Importunity is of the essence of successful prayer.* Importunity means not dreaminess but sustained work. It is through prayer especially that the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force"—an aspect of prayer to which reference has been made in the preceding chapter.

That the type of prayer alluded to in Canon Liddon's eloquent paragraph is not the whole of prayer no student of religion would deny. It is, however, illustrative of the fact that much prayer cannot be described as auto-suggestion. If we limit our notion of the nature of prayer to that of a spiritual "wrestling," there is clearly nothing more to be said in the present discussion. But, as we have noted in an earlier chapter, prayer must be defined more broadly. Take, for instance, the definition given us by Coleridge: "The act of praying is the very highest energy of which the human mind is capable; praying, that is, with the total concentration of the faculties. The great mass of worldly men and of learned men are absolutely incapable of prayer." Obviously, Coleridge has in mind a specially intense and exclusive form of human address. The severity of his final sentence would be inexcusable on a broader view.

Turning, now, to the consideration of that type of prayer represented by the "Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius Loyola or the Yoga practices, the prayer of mysticism, we find a state of mind in which is lacking that element of strain found in Liddon's prayer of importunity. Here is found that mental relaxation and contemplation conducive to successful auto-suggestion. What is known as the prayer of mysticism is found in the experience of all to whom prayer is a real and a vital experience. Not only

have "the great mass of worldly men and learned men" had their moments of peaceful assurance of fellowship with the Divine, but a similar mysticism pervades the totem-rites of the Australian aborigines; it is found in the Peruvian sun-worship, in the sacramental meals of the modern Hindus, as also in the ancient Mysteries of the Greeks and Romans. Mysticism, regarded as expressing "the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relation with God, on direct and immediate consciousness of the Divine Presence" (Professor Rufus Jones), is universal.

Even in mysticism, however, is found that type of prayer which gives little scope for the peace and relaxation of mind conducive to what Baudouin terms "the outcropping of the subconscious." Consider, for example, this outburst from the great German mystic, Jacob Boehme, wherein he describes the way to the *via unitiva* as an intense struggle: "While I was in affliction and trouble, I elevated my spirit, and earnestly raised it up unto God, as with a great stress and onset, lifting up my whole heart and mind and will and resolution to wrestle with the love and mercy of God and not to give over unless He blessed me—then the Spirit did break through. When in my resolved zeal I made such an assault, storm, and onset upon God, as if I had more reserves of virtue and power ready, with a resolution to hazard my life upon it, suddenly my Spirit did break through the Gate, not without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and I reached to the innermost birth of the Deity, and there I was embraced with love as a bridegroom embraces his bride. My triumphing can be compared to nothing but the experience in which life is generated in the midst of death or like the resurrection from the dead. In this Light my spirit suddenly saw through all, and in all created things, even in herbs and grass, I knew God—who He is, how He is, and what His will is—and suddenly in that Light my will was

set upon by a mighty impulse to describe the being of God.”*

The ecstatic state, described so vividly by Boehme, is the culmination of all systems of mystical approach to the Deity. The method of approach varies. Wherever mysticism has produced a system of religious discipline and exercise, there we find the *scala perfectionis*, the carefully defined and graduated ladder of ascent to the Deity. The final stage in all is the state of perfect contemplation wherein there is effected complete union with God, and devout hearts “arrive at that eternal image after which they were created, and contemplate God and all things without distinction, in a simple beholding, in Divine glory. This is the loftiest and most profitable contemplation to which men attain in this life” (Tauler). This consummation may be described as Spiritual Marriage (St. Teresa), or it is boldly called Deification (E. G. Ruysbroek). To the Buddhist, of course, it is Nirvana, attained by treading the “eightfold path.”

Let us again remind ourselves that many who are not mystics as such also have their times of vision, or of ecstasy, that in dealing with the psychology of this mental state we may not appear to be dealing with an exclusive or merely ecclesiastical phenomenon. Dean Inge (“Christian Mysticism,” p. 14) quotes a remarkable paragraph from the “Life of Tennyson.” There the poet says: “A kind of waking trance I have often had, quite from boyhood, when I have been all alone. This has generally come upon me through repeating my own name two or three times to myself silently, till all at once, out of the intensity of the consciousness of individuality, the individual itself seemed to dissolve and fade away into boundless being; and this is not a confused state, but the clearest of the clearest, and the surest of the surest, the weirdest of the weirdest, utterly beyond words, where death was almost a laughable

* “The Aurora,” xix., pp. 10-13.

impossibility, the loss of personality (if so it were) seeming no extinction, but the only true life."

It is clear that in this state of mind there is indeed strong presumption that the process of auto-suggestion operates. Baudouin demands for the success of that process such absence of tension and strain as to facilitate the "outcropping of the subconscious." According to his translators ("Suggestion and Auto-suggestion," p. 10), "The most significant phenomenon of auto-suggestion occurs in the domain of the subconscious. The new powers which auto-suggestion offers to mankind are based upon the acquirement of a reflective control of the operations of the subconscious." Compare with this the statement of the Dean of St. Paul's in the first chapter of his Bampton Lectures: "Ecstasy begins when thought ceases, *to our consciousness*, to proceed from ourselves. It differs from dreaming, because the subject is awake. It differs from hallucination, because there is no organic disturbance; it is, or claims to be, a temporary enhancement, not a partial disintegration, of the mental faculties. Lastly, it differs from poetical inspiration because the imagination is passive."

Notice, further, the testimony of Tauler to the reality of the mystic vision. "God draws us," says he, "in three ways—first, by His creatures; secondly, by His voice in the soul, when an eternal truth mysteriously suggests itself, as happens not infrequently in morning sleep; thirdly, without resistance or means, when the will is quite subdued."

The mystic vision, then, is essentially a thing of the subconscious. It may also be realized spontaneously in the state preceding full wakefulness in the morning—for such is surely Tauler's meaning—the time when, according to the new Nancy school, the best results are obtained in auto-suggestion. In a word, we are forced to the conclusion that in prayer generally, and in mystical prayer

in particular, there are characteristic elements which approximate the mental state involved to that recognized as conducive to auto-suggestion. That is to say, where the prayerful spirit experiences a quiescent sense of immediacy in its relationship with its God and the conscious mind, to speak crudely, is comparatively at rest, in such a state are found the psychological conditions prerequisite to successful auto-suggestion. We have seen that it is impossible to speak of all prayer as being nothing more than suggestions conveyed to oneself. The necessary conditions are not normally forthcoming. Can we say, however, that the mystical type of prayer is of that subjective character? Undoubtedly the process in question does enter more or less conspicuously into prayer, as, indeed, it enters more or less conspicuously into every realm of thought. The obvious difference is that prayer involves an increased suggestibility as compared with the secular forms of thought common to all men. Further, it is clear that the subjective element predominates in many of the recorded prayers of the great mystics. Eroticism is a feature of Platonic as well as of Judaistic and Christian Mysticism, and erotic imagery is very frequent in the literature of the mystics.

No auto-suggestion, however, can be purely subjective. This we have seen to be true in view of man's necessary social relationships. We also noted that the so-called auto-suggestion expounded gains its success from its primary and continued relatedness to himself. There is, moreover, another sense in which the subjectiveness of this process is limited, when it operates in religion and in psycho-therapy particularly. One of the conditions of suggestibility remarked in our analysis of the mental state presupposed by prayer was that of faith in the friendliness and goodwill of the object of adoration or worship. Religious man will go to almost any extreme of self-mortification to secure harmonious relationship with his God.

Now all auto-suggestion, without exception, presupposes a similar faith in the friendliness or ultimate stability and justice of the world-order. Such is the psycho-therapeutic significance of M. Coué's influence over his patients. The following extract from the description of his method contained in "The Practice of Auto-suggestion" is illuminating as an illustration of the use of hetero-suggestion by an exponent of auto-suggestion. But note particularly Coué's insistence on the encouraging note. All is well, he insists, and what appears wrong will disappear under the magic of "*Ça passe, ça passe.*"

"Coué now passed on to the formulation of specific suggestions. The patients closed their eyes, and he proceeded in a low, monotonous voice to evoke before their minds the states of health, mental and physical, they were seeking. As they listened to him their alertness ebbed away, they were lulled into a drowsy state, peopled only by the vivid images he called up before the eyes of the mind. The faint rustle of the trees, the songs of the birds, the low voices of those waiting in the garden, merged into a pleasant background, on which his words stood out powerfully.

"This is what he said: 'I must also add—and it is extremely important—that if in the past you have lacked confidence in yourself, this self-distrust will gradually disappear. You will have confidence in yourself. I repeat, *you will have confidence.* . . .'

"These general suggestions were succeeded by particular suggestions referring to the special ailments from which Coué's patients were suffering. Taking each case in turn, he allowed his hand to rest lightly on the heads of the sufferers, while picturing to their minds the health and vigour with which they would soon be endowed. Thus to a woman with an ulcerated leg he spoke as follows: 'Henceforth your organism will do all that is necessary to restore your leg to perfect health. It will rapidly heal;

the tissues will regain their tone; the skin will be soft and healthy. In a short space of time your leg will be vigorous and strong, and will in future always remain so.' Each special complaint was thus treated with a few appropriate phrases. When he had finished, and the patients were called on to open their eyes, a faint sigh went round the room, as if they were awaking reluctantly from a delicious dream."

Now it is manifest that in his clinic M. Coué sought to establish confidence—general confidence—in the optimistic interpretation of life. He was, in fact, striving to inculcate the indispensable pre-requisite to auto-suggestion, a confidence that the laws of nature will be beneficent if only we will give them opportunity, or, more generally, that the universe is fundamentally friendly and will guarantee a healing response to the process defined and inaugurated by the Nancy practitioner. In this sense it would be truer to say that auto-suggestion is prayer than to reverse the proposition and aver that prayer is auto-suggestion. The trust or confidence presupposed by this psychological exercise bears a distinctly religious stamp.

Let it be admitted, therefore, that in certain types of prayer the process under discussion operates more or less manifestly. Such an admission is at best but a recognition that prayer calls into exercise mental processes used in all thinking. It has no necessary bearing on the question of the validity of the reference of prayer. It certainly cannot be said to negate it. Indeed, on the analogy of psycho-therapy the beneficial effects of prayer may be said to substantiate its validity. Under the pragmatic test, prayerful auto-suggestion stands. Here there are established permanent after-effects of a definitely psychological and physiological value. Here, in prayer, is found that resultant repose and confidence of mind in the absence of which debilitating and abortive fears may have unchallenged sway, and by the establishing of which many

psychic ills have been cured. That the psycho-therapeutic value of religion is recognized, even by psychologists who do not accept the truth of religion, is sufficiently attested by their writings. The agnostic Dubois of Berne says: "Religious faith would be the best preventative against the maladies of the soul and the most powerful means of curing them if it had sufficient life to create true Christian stoicism in its followers. Feeling himself upheld by his God, he fears neither sickness nor death . . . he remains unshaken in the midst of his sufferings, and is inaccessible to the cowardly emotions of nervous people."*

Too much, probably, may be made of the argument from experience. Testimony is indicative of the assurance of the experient, but the validity of that experience depends upon more than assurance. It depends ultimately upon a metaphysic. The corporate testimony, however, of the vast majority of the human race that definite fellowship has been experienced with the object of worship, and that there is a definite objectivity felt to exist in that relationship, strengthens the probability that while religions vary, religion itself contains an element of truth and validity which is inexplicable on subjective grounds. It is certainly of great psychological interest to note the assurance of prayerful man that he is addressing an objectively existent and responsive Being or beings, more especially since that assurance is common to civilized and savage men, to intellectual and thoughtless.

We return to the conclusion reached in our study of prayer in the light of hetero-suggestion, and find again that, while the study of suggestion throws great light on the experience of praying man, psychology does not invalidate the claim of the religious consciousness to the objectivity and reality of the Deity. The great light thrown upon all forms and types of thought by the modernized concept of suggestion has undoubted value

* Quoted by Hadfield, "The Spirit," p. 114.

in so far as it shows the essential normality of much of religious thought. It is not too much to claim, nevertheless, that the findings of the New Psychology have not affected the question of the ultimate validity of the religious postulate, save perhaps that they strengthen the probability of its truth. If auto-suggestion, for example, be a normal and universal process of thought, its manifest presence in the religious exercise of prayer will not be unexpected, since religion is an attitude and an activity involving close relationship with other departments of life, and is necessarily mediated by mental processes operative in other fields of thought.

The closing chapters of this essay will contain an attempt to deal with the philosophical issues raised in the course of our study of the psychology of prayer. It will therefore be invidious to proceed further with the question of the objective validity of religion. We note, however, in conclusion, that suggestion of every type is concerned with the subconscious activity of mind. Successful suggestion, as Baudouin claims, has for its result in the mind of the subject the subconscious realization of an idea. With or without the consent and co-operation of the rational factor in consciousness, the communicated idea obtains root in the mind, and from the subconscious proceeds to affect and influence the life. Sufficient has been said in the course of this chapter to show that prayer presupposes increased suggestibility, and is concerned to a great extent with the subconscious in the mind of the suppliant. Let us recall the definition arrived at in an earlier part of this thesis. In discussing the nature of prayer we found reason to assert that—

Prayer is intercourse with an ideal Being or beings conceived as objectively existent, superior, personal, and responsive—an intercourse which presupposes definite psychological conditions and produces definite psychological effects. Prayer, as a genuine phenomenon of the psychical

life, is universal and reflects the forms of human social relationship, and as the central act of religion it is closely related to the subliminal processes of the mind.

The final statement in that definition is of importance and relevance to our present line of discussion. Viewing prayer in the light of hetero-suggestion, we were led to the decision that, if there exists an objectively real Being desirous of influencing human life, then it is a priori highly probable that such influence would be most easily communicated in the act of prayer, since in that act are fulfilled all the necessary conditions of increased suggestibility. In regard to auto-suggestion, we found that the word is merely a name applied to a certain manner of thinking, and that the application of that concept to the mental processes involved in prayer proves that prayerful man does not transcend the laws of his own psychic constitution. It is clear, therefore, that prayer is a religious act necessarily related to the subliminal processes of the mind, and that not only is it a priori probable that man in that act receives communications from a supra-human realm, but that such communications are mediated by the subconscious. Further, it is a posteriori probable that real intercourse is effected in prayer, for the general effects of that exercise are beneficial to the individual and to the race. Assuming that such communications are mediated by the subconscious "realm" of the mind, it would follow, as in so-called secular thought, that they are coloured by the mediating channel, and that the diversity of religious forms and conceptions is no necessary proof of their invalidity.

In brief, it is unscientific to call prayer auto-suggestion. It is a confusion of the part with the whole. Modern psychology assents to St. Anselm's *Credo ut intelligam* as a normal law of thought. It may well prove to be as true of man's historic and universal attitude to the supra-normal. Viewed from the merely psychological point of

view—merely, that is to say, as distinct from the philosophical—William James's theory of contact with a spiritual world has much to commend it. There is a substratum of universal consent in all religious experience which is most easily explained by reference to an objective Reality. If the modern psychological concept of suggestion throws light upon the nature of prayer, it is of the nature of an indication that religious men are in contact with a suggesting and guiding, a beneficent Power, and that "whenever they open the eyes of their souls the Eternal Light pours in" (Pratt).

PART III

PHILOSOPHICAL

CHAPTER VIII

PRAYER AND THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

THE preceding chapters have dealt with prayer from the phenomenological standpoint, and but scant attention has been paid to the ontological issues which were raised. Prayer is a definite and universal feature of human activity, and as such it may be examined and discussed upon a purely psychological basis. That is to say, the matter might be left just where it is at the present stage of our treatment if our concern were with prayer merely as a phenomenon of psychological and sociological interest. Since the consideration of philosophical issues will lead us away from the psychology of prayer as such, why raise the issues? The answer is, obviously enough, that the psychologist cannot help being a philosopher. He must at least begin with some criteria of classification, and will, naturally, apply some sort of working theory to the results of his analysis and classifications. But the step aside from the more or less purely psychological which we propose to take in this concluding section of the essay involves something more than a mere working-theory attempt to correlate and explain the data before us. Our purpose is to add to what has already been said of the naturalness and general normality of prayer in its relation to mental processes a brief contribution to Christian apologetics; to show, in a word, that prayerful man is not mistaken when he affirms the existence of his own soul

and that of his God, and, further, that a mutual interest and an effective relationship unites the two.

We begin, therefore, with a concise summary of the results achieved in the preceding chapters, and then proceed to examine the various theories of the nature of the human soul, or more accurately, of the relationship between the mental and the physical.

In our definition of prayer we postulated several distinctive features—viz., the conception of an objectively existent, superior, personal, and responsive Being or beings; the psychological significance of prayer; its sociological character and its relation to the subliminal processes of the mind. Regarding prayer as a universal and general concomitant of religion of which it is a natural expression, we discussed the psychic factors involved in supplication. Prayer, it was shown, is not derived invariably from spell. It may deteriorate into spell, and often does, and spell may develop into real supplication, but what evidence there is indicates a common origin for both. Both religion and magic have their source in the primitive response to forces experienced as being greater than human. The development of prayer may be traced from the earliest cries of men, through the simple, eudæmonistic, and social worship of tribal religion, and the regular and ritualistic prayer of national religion, to the individualistic prayers of the great universal religions.

In all prayer there are presupposed definite psychological conditions. Man cherishes a threefold belief—in the existence of the spirits or spirit, in their approachability and accessibility, and in the possibility of real communion between the human and the divine. The mental attitude may be analyzed psychologically into its cognitive, conative, and affective elements.

Modern psychology has thrown much light on the prayer-life of man. Concerning itself mainly with the exploration and analysis of the unconscious and the ex-

amination of psychopathic conditions, it has demonstrated the importance of these for the study of religion. Some forms of the newer psychological thought offer a serious challenge to the claims of the religious consciousness. The idea of God may be a projection of human desires. Witness the universal anthropomorphism in religion. Prayer, again, may be mere auto-suggestion, which would account for its psycho-therapeutic value. The condemnation of anthropomorphism, however, proves too much. All knowledge is necessarily mediated by and coloured by the human consciousness. Auto-suggestion, moreover, is a relative term. The process is always closely related to things external to the mind. There is more in prayer than can be explained by auto-suggestion, although that process does play a part. The conditions of successful hetero-suggestion are fulfilled in prayer, pointing to the probability that in that religious exercise man receives definite suggestions from a supramundane sphere.

Since prayer is native to man and is closely related to the normal processes of the mind, the dominant instincts find clear and universal expression in its forms and utterances. These are the instincts of the ego and the herd and the sex-instinct. There is no religious instinct as a distinct impulse in human nature. The instinctive basis of religion is composite. Prayer is by no means invalidated by its lowly origin, for, logically applied, that criticism would invalidate all knowledge, both scientific and religious.

Having reached thus far in our treatment of the psychology of prayer, we turn to examine the philosophical issues raised, and note, first of all, that prayer involves a theory of the human soul which is not universally accepted. In particular, the Christian doctrine of the soul is challenged from several standpoints.

Prayer in all its forms is, as has been illustrated, essentially based upon a sense of relationship. Whether, with

Clement of Alexandria, we define it as "conversation and intercourse with God," or, more adequately, with Professor William James as "every kind of inward communion or conversation with the power recognized as divine," or whether we limit it to a particular type such as petition or invocation, there is always presupposed the assumption of a specific relationship existing between the human and the divine. The analysis of that relationship is fundamental to any examination of prayer. It is one thing to speak, as does W. Bousett, of "a dialogue between our innermost self and Almighty God," or to affirm, with J. Martineau,* that "there is a direct and mutual communion of spirit with spirit between ourselves and God, in which He receives our affection and gives a responsive breathing of His inspiration," but it is quite a different thing to state in unambiguous phraseology the meaning of such ideal definitions. For they abound in presuppositions, and, noble and ideal as they are, they must give account of themselves before the bar of reason.

The fact of prayer presupposes a recognized relationship existing between the human soul and a supra-human power. Before we can approximate to an adequate philosophy of prayer, it will be necessary to glance at a problem which has received the attention of thinkers throughout all the more enlightened ages. What is involved in the expression "the human soul," etc.? Does it connote "human person" in the general sense, or "spiritual entity" as distinct from man's bodily organization? If it be true, as Professor James alleged, that "souls are out of fashion," what is substituted for them, and is there any adequate ground for the change of fashion in the realm of psychology?

Until the hypotheses of Materialism have been examined, and until we discover sufficient reason for the rejection of the "psychology without a soul," we have no right to

* "Hours of Thought," ii., p. 224.

proceed with the examination of prayer as based on the assumption that it involves a real and objective relationship between the human being and a trans-subjective agency. If Professor Huxley's dictum, that "anyone who is acquainted with the history of science will admit that its progress has, in all ages, meant, and now more than ever means, the extension of the province of what we call matter and causation, and the concomitant banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity" be substantiated, then there is nothing more to be said about prayer other than to class it among those relics of a primeval animism with which the advance of civilization is still tempered.

(A) Modern theories of the relation of spirit to body are susceptible of convenient classification. There is, first of all, the thoroughgoing materialistic hypothesis which goes by the name of Epiphenomenalism, Psycho-physical Materialism, or Automatism. According to this theory, the stream of consciousness is the epiphenomenon of the brain-process, a terminology which owes its origin to T. H. Huxley. The modern forms of this theory are refinements of the cruder assertion of Hobbes, whose philosophical system was one of rigid mechanical necessity, developed out of automatism. The motions of bodies are transmitted through the air to the brain and the heart, and are met by a reactionary movement, which is sent back to the object, and which generates in us the belief in externality—an avowedly material explanation of mental states. Hume was directly indebted to the manner in which Gassendi and Hobbes had influenced the current of English thought in the direction of a materialistic explanation of things, and Hume's successors are numbered among the modern materialists.

The modern theory of Epiphenomenalism embodies the tenet that all elements of consciousness are caused by corresponding processes in the brain. "It seems to

me," says Huxley, "that in men, as in brutes, there is no proof that any state of consciousness is the cause of the change in the motion of the matter of the organism. If these positions are well based, it follows that our mental conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of the changes that take place automatically in the organism; and that, to take an extreme illustration, the feeling we call volition is not the cause of a voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act. We are conscious automata."*

Now, it is becoming increasingly realized that no physiological explanation of mental states and processes is worthy of serious regard in the domain of philosophy. The following are suggested as being adequate reasons for the rejection of the theory under discussion:

(1) The whole theory is a gigantic *petitio principii*. They "do plainly dance round in a circle," as Cudworth affirms of Hobbes and his school. Every explanation of the universe is of necessity the outcome of a mental process, and a material world of sense cannot be constructed as intelligible, cannot even be rationally or scientifically spoken about, without taking for granted the existence of mind or consciousness. In attempting to explain thought out of matter, we are trying to account for it by that which itself requires thought for its explanation. "Materialism reposed contentedly upon the couch prepared for it by Descartes, a strictly causal, mechanical theory of the universe; and its rest was untroubled by the alarming certainty that matter, extension, number, cause—in short, the whole real and palpable external world—necessarily presupposed a sensitive and intelligent consciousness without which it could have no existence for mankind."† Thought is itself the *prius* of all things, and to explain thought out

* *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1874.

† Ludwig, "Introd. to Max Müller's Trans. of the Critique of Pure Reason."

of matter is, from the philosophical point of view, the crowning instance of a *hysteron proteron*.*

(2) Not only is it true that "Materialism begins with an unknown quantity and ends with an unsoluble problem,"† but the theory is condemned by its implications. Logically followed out, the "banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity" of which Huxley speaks leads to absurdity. On the materialistic hypothesis the order of mental phenomena is parallel with an order of physical phenomena, determined by purely mechanical conditions. According to the exponent of this theory already quoted, consciousness is proved to be "related to the mechanism of the body simply as a collateral product of its working, and to be as completely without any power of modifying that working as the steam whistle which accompanies the work of a locomotive engine is without influence upon its machinery."‡ There could be no better reply to this than the *reductio ad absurdum*. Epiphenomenalism leaves no room whatever for the agency of the mind. "The mind of Hipparchus was not the agent which made known to man the Precession of the Equinoxes; nor were the thoughts of Newton the cause of the writing of the 'Principia'; nor did those of Kepler cause the enunciation, either by pen or voice, of the laws which bear his name. These philosophers were merely conscious automata; and had they been unconscious automata the result would still have been the very same."§

(3) The assertion that mental phenomena are products of cerebral changes is opposed to the physical law of the Conservation of Energy. If mental phenomena are pro-

* *Vide* Orr, "The Christian View of God and the World," p. 150.

† A. B. Bruce, "Apologetics," 3rd ed., p. 105.

‡ T. H. Huxley, article, "The Hypothesis that Animals are Automata," *Fortnightly Review*, Nov., 1874.

§ Kennedy, "Natural Theology and Modern Thought," p. 76.

duced by material causes it can only be at the expense of some degree of energy. Physical energy, that is to say, is transformed into vital energy and this in turn into thought—a process one is compelled to postulate in order to maintain the materialistic theory. The difficulty is that there is no evidence for such a transformation. As Professor Stout says ("Manual," p. 49), "there is no sufficient evidence of this, and all that we know points in the contrary direction." But the hypothesis is condemned by more than lack of evidence; it is demonstrably contrary to the facts. The essence of the law of the conservation of energy is that no energy disappears. What goes by the name of "transformation of energy" is nothing other than change from one kind of motion to the other. For example, heat is "transformed" into electricity, light, etc. Motion either directly produces motion or is converted into potential energy, which produces eventually, or can produce, some form of motion. Now consciousness is a fact which transcends the physical order on the verdict of such a law. The energy present at the beginning of the nerve process is accounted for in the physical state of the brain at the end. There is no residual energy for the production of the phenomenon of consciousness. This being true of sensation, the simplest form of consciousness, it is much more so in regard to the more complex process of the self-conscious life.

It should be pointed out that this use of the so-called law of the Conservation of Energy involves no assumption as to the extent of its application. We may admit Professor Ward's claim "that not only does the principle of the conservation of energy tell us nothing about the quantity of energy in the universe as a whole, but that it does not even allow us to say that such quantity is an amount eternally fixed," and still insist on the mechanical principle that in any given series transformation of energy involves no modification of its quantity. On the view,

then, that matter is all, there is no room for the psychical by-products as postulated by epiphenomenalism.

But if it be asserted that in point of fact there is no transference of energy involved in the hypothesis under examination, then there must arise a gross violation of the law of causation. Apart from the obvious criticism that the production of consciousness by physical processes is in reality creation *ex nihilo*, there is the further consideration that, there being no "escape" of energy, the cause has in no measure passed over into the effect. It thus saves the law of conservation of energy at the expense of the law of causation.

(4) The materialistic doctrine is not supported by evidence from the relevant domains of research. The greater part of the brain, probably all of it, is employed in sensory-motor work, and there is little or none that can be reserved for other processes, which leads to the belief that the primary function of the brain is to serve as a centre of sensory-motor activity and not as an organ of thought. Physiology discredits the "mind-cells" of Haeckel and the memory-cells of Professor Bain.

(B) The second hypothesis which demands attention is that of psycho-physical Parallelism, which postulates a relation of concomitance between the psychical and the physical. According to this view, there is no causal relation between them. Contemporaneously with physical changes there emerge modifications of consciousness. There are several variations of this view—variations which necessarily embody postulates as to the ultimate nature of real existence. These are theories which find the solution to the problem in a form of monism. Mind and matter are but two aspects of the same reality. The realistic monism of Herbert Spencer assumed an unknown and unknowable Absolute of which mind and body are merely appearances. This was also the teaching of Strauss, Lange, and Haeckel, and it bears a close resem-

blance to the phenomenalist parallelism of Kant. The pantheistic philosophy of Spinoza, also, had led to his view that "Mind and body are one and the same substance, or, rather, one and the same mode of substance, and that which under the attribute of extension appears as more or less composite forms of motion appears under the attribute of thought as more or less composite forms of thought.*

A view more popular at the present time is that which postulates consciousness as the only reality. The brain processes are but the phenomenal manifestations of consciousness. As distinct from Solipsism, this view does not deny the existence of the physical world, but asserts that its real nature is consciousness. The assertion that my consciousness is the reality of my cerebral cortex involves the corollary that the whole physical universe is in its reality spiritual. Such is the teaching of Gustave Theodor Fechner, from whose pen came the first systematic and clear expression of the Psychical Monism hypothesis.

Now psycho-physical parallelism proper, by which we mean the view that bodily and mental processes are simply contemporaneous, there being no causal connection between the two, is based upon an essential dualism, a dualism which the more logical of its exponents dissolve into a more or less crude monism. The monism which such writers admit is nothing but materialism in new garb. Mind remains a fact which has somehow to be reconciled with the fact of matter. Both classes of fact progress concurrently, the theory being that they are completely disparate and concomitant. Each series is closed, and neither can gain access to the other. Such an antinomy looks back to the dualism of the Cartesian school, to the Occasionalism of Geulinx and Malebranche, which was by way of being a desperate expedient to solve the acute antithesis left by Descartes himself. "The theory of psycho-physical parallelism," says Dr. Ward, "is indeed, as it seems to

* Hoffding, "History of Modern Philosophy," p. 319.

me, but the scientific counterpart of that occasionalism to which the followers of Descartes were driven in their endeavour to account for the correspondence between mental states and bodily movements. But whereas according to the Occasionalists the Deity intervened as each occasion demanded, here the psychical series is held to be mechanically predetermined and to be capable of calculation in Laplacean fashion.”*

It is patent that psycho-physical parallelism does not bridge the gulf between mind and matter. It presupposes, originates from, and champions a dualistic *Weltanschauung*, and makes only a partially successful, and often self-contradictory, attempt to resolve the antithesis.

Moreover, that there should be physical states corresponding to all the intricacies and subtleties of human thought is, to say the least, inconceivable. Whatever the philosopher makes of the principle of causation—even if he espouses the Humian postulate of mere ordered and regular sequence—it is obviously contrary to the facts to allege that the sequence is precisely the same in the mental as in the material sphere.

This difficulty is more systematically met in those forms of psycho-physical parallelism which are known generally as the “two-aspect” theories. As already noted, these theories claim that the physical and the psychical are but two sides of the same process. What from one point of view appears as consciousness, from another standpoint appears as physical process.

In reply to such a doctrine of the psycho-physical relationship, it may be pointed out that in reality it offers no real solution. It merely applies a new name to the relationship, and credits itself with having solved the dilemma. For, clearly, the problem is no nearer solution when we have postulated an unknown something of which both mind and matter are differing aspects. Unless

* “Naturalism and Agnosticism,” ii., p. 6.

we can show that there is some underlying unity of which these two aspects are expressive and by which they are united, our hypothesis is in essence an assumption based on no adequate evidence. It is, yet once more, an instance of assuming what is to be proved, "the surreptitious assumption of a truth you are pretending to prove," as Mr. Alfred Sidgwick defined *petitio principii*.

Moreover, there is no evidence forthcoming to show that it is possible to unite what are confessedly distinct aspects into one concrete experience. Two orders so radically different cannot be assumed to be complementary aspects of the same process in the absence of demonstration that it is possible to pass from one aspect to the other and so indicate the essential unity of which they are both expressions. As in the case of materialistic monism, so in the case of parallelism. Physiology does not support the theory. Experiments with animals have conclusively revealed that there is no fixed ratio between the degree of intelligence and the complexity of brain structure. The brain of the dog, *e.g.*, is less complex in its formation, less elaborate in its convolutions, than is the brain of the horse; but the dog is the more intelligent.

It remains to notice another view of the psycho-physical relation—that, namely, which embodies the doctrine that consciousness is the only reality, while physical processes are but the phenomenal manifestations of conscious processes. Now the common-sense criticism of this is to the effect that if the only reality is the knowing process, there is no other reality to know. There is no one to possess knowledge and no knowledge to possess save that of consciousness. And such criticism, albeit superficial, has more than an element of validity in it. This theory, which is the converse of Epiphenomenalism, with its claim to find in dead, unconscious matter "the promise and potency of all self-conscious life," is really Berkeleyan. Over against the current exaltation of matter and the "philosophical

dust," which led more than one philosopher to complain that he "could not see," Berkeley proclaimed the spiritual as the deepest reality. His postulate was the immateriality of the external world, the non-existence of an unspiritual, unthinking matter. This is not far removed from W. K. Clifford's claim that "the universe consists entirely of mind-stuff," and some of the more modern exponents seem not to have wholly appreciated the weakness of the Berkeleian system.

The idealistic form of psycho-physical parallelism must plead guilty to several strong indictments. The individual consciousness is a stream of consciousness possessing its own unique characteristics, and as such is clearly demarcated from other forms of reality. Every individual stream of consciousness is distinct, an entity in itself, and no explanation of reality as consciousness only can account for the individualistic character of the conscious processes. Psycho-physical parallelism cannot solve "the metaphysical riddle how out of the multiplicity of atomic movements there arises the unity of the psychical image."* It is equally impotent to account for the enduring and retentive character of the individual consciousness, which is made individual by its specific mode of reaction—reaction which is relatively constant and stable. Such permanence, such stability, demands an explanation which is not forthcoming from the psychical monist, for no permanence can arise from the continual flowing of streams of thought. When to these fundamental objections we add the consideration that if consciousness be the only reality, then only a subtle adjustment of the doctrine can provide for the inclusion of those states of unconsciousness in which existence continues to be real, and if as a further criticism be added the impossibility of uniting any and all individual and diverse minds in the larger streams of, *e.g.*, national consciousness, it appears that this form of

* F. A. Lange, "Einleitung," p. 387.

the parallelistic thesis is no more satisfactory than the others previously considered.

(C) On any materialistic hypothesis the facts of self-consciousness and moral freedom remain an irreconcilable and inexplicable enigma. The ego, the self in consciousness, cannot be reduced to an illusion, a hyper-physical figment. There is a persistence in the midst of change, a permanence which no merely materialistic theory can account for. Moreover, there is involved in the very fact of recognition of that unity and permanence the presence of a self that knows it. "Our belief," says Lotze, "in the soul's unity rests, not on our appearing to ourselves such a unity, but on our being able to appear to ourselves at all. . . . What a being appears to itself to be is not the important point; if it can appear anyhow to itself, or other things to it, it must be capable of unifying manifold phenomena in an absolute indivisibility of its nature."*

It seems, therefore, that we must postulate the existence of a unifying agency, a spiritual and stable entity in which all mental states cohere and by which they are made intelligible. And the theory of the soul commits us to interactionist views. Interactionism is not without its own peculiar difficulties, but none are such as to appear ultimately insuperable. While contradicting none of the accepted facts of consciousness, this theory has, in its turn, to recognize the inexplicability of much of human experience. But inexplicability does not involve inconceivability. It is true that the actual nature of the process of modification of matter by mind and vice versa is beyond us. How exactly the "push" is given we are not to know. That mind does influence matter is a truism made even more patent by the observed phenomena of suggestion. There is a release of energy under mental stimuli or the strengthening of inhibitions which formerly were weak, etc. The facts are certainly there, and we venture

* "Microcosmos," p. 157.

to assert that there is no argument against modern animistic theories so strong and decisive as those which led to the rejection of the opposing theories.

It is obvious that there can be no room for prayer as involving a real relationship between the human and the divine if the materialistic theory be valid. For the materialist there is neither soul nor God. If he is ill at ease before the fact of self-consciousness he would be even more embarrassed under the necessity of explaining the objectivity of the religious relationship. There can be no prayer to a material principle. "Haeckel, the materialist," says H. E. Fosdick in his little book on "The Meaning of Prayer," "has displaced the Creator by a primal substance which he solemnly crowns Emperor of the universe under the title of Mobile Cosmic Ether. Can we imagine anyone finding vital and sustaining help in supplications addressed to such an object, or are vast congregations likely to be stirred in adoration, praying, 'O Mobile Cosmic Ether, hallowed be thy name'?" Notwithstanding the *argumentum ad hominem*, excusable, perhaps, in a devotional, non-scientific book, we must concede the point and recognize the inconceivability of prayer on any materialistic hypothesis.

Parallelism is equally inimical to religion in any of its aspects. For, in its turn, it also rules out all religious conceptions and hopes and aspirations. That being true of religion in general, it is particularly true of prayer in which the religious spirit finds its highest and most frequent expression. The theory demands a pre-established harmony and calls loudly for a *deus ex machina*, who is so mechanicalized and materialized and has so little to do when once the mental and bodily series are started on their corresponding progress that it seems a shame to invoke him.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that the human soul is a unitary psychic being—an hypothesis necessary to explain

the synthesis and fusion of sensations. It is this active, developing, yet relatively persistent individual centre of consciousness focalized, though not necessarily localized, at only one particular point in the brain—this structure of personality—whose existence constitutes the real problem. Aware of itself, it acts and feels and knows and contrives, and knows itself as such. It cannot be resolved into anything else or explained away; it is there, and asserts itself at a certain stage of development in challenge of all attempts to ignore it.

Believing that mental processes are not susceptible of explanation in terms of materialism, we regard the soul as the ground of the unity of consciousness and of psychical individuality. Granted that complete ignorance obtains as to the manner in which the physical affects the psychical, and vice versa; even granted that it is difficult to reconcile interactionism with the idea of causation presupposed in all our empirical knowledge, we conclude that the facts as at present delineated by recent research receive their most adequate and least contradictory explanation on the interactionist soul-theory.

Some justification has been given for the rejection of those theories which, to be consistent, rule out the validity of religion. In so far as that attempt has been successful the ground is clear for the consideration of the central problem of religious philosophy—viz., that of the real objective existence of the Divine. Prayer postulates, or presupposes, a personal object of address. Is there adequate philosophic ground for the religious postulate? Is prayer a real transaction between the human soul and a Divine Being, or is the latter a fanciful, albeit biologically valuable, projection of human desire? Together with the question of the real existence of God must be considered the probability of such a relationship as prayer presupposes to exist between God and man, a relationship which issues in definite effects within human experience.

CHAPTER IX

PRAYER AND THE IDEA OF GOD

MAN seldom argues himself into religion. As a rule his arguments relate to something he has already experienced, a tendency to seek succour and fellowship in a sphere above and beyond his own. In point of time, of course, religion preceded philosophy. Man was reacting to the external world in religious attitudes long before "the owl of Minerva awoke." It has remained much the same throughout human history. Religion remains predominantly traditional, and it is to be feared that even in our modern renaissance of religious philosophy the bulk of the devout are not concerned to think out the implications of their faith. The effect of rationalism, let it be admitted, is not always salutary in religion. It is notoriously intolerant, and in some of its moods recklessly iconoclastic. But it is inevitable. As soon as religious man has sufficient respite from the exigencies of primitive existence to ponder over the greater and more abstract problems of life, he is confronted with the fact of the universality of religion. Man everywhere is, by common consent, stretching out his hands to an invisible and intangible realm where abide beings who, perhaps, capricious, and probably amenable to the bribery of *Do ut des*, are nevertheless superior to man in knowledge and power. Invisible and potent, these beings afford many visible manifestations of their power. Primitive man would never be without tangible evidence of the existence of the spirits. It would be as unnatural to find an atheistic savage as it would be to find an atheistic child, although,

sadly enough, the modern child may imbibe anti-religious notions from its environment in quite tender years.

Sometimes, however, the gods fail. Where fetishism sets its mark of decadence upon religion, man has begun to discriminate between the real and the imagined presence of the spirit. Then the sustained success of other peoples and the more effective enticements of their religions may do more than indicate the displeasure or absence of a certain deity. It may destroy belief in him altogether. The Hebrews secede to Baal when their worship of Yahweh issues in disappointment. Since the gods display their presence and power by such unmistakable signs as victory in battle, fire from heaven, and the dividing of waters, the absence of such concrete demonstration leads inevitably to doubt and a transference of worship. Modern unbelief, what little, comparatively, there is of an absolute and thoroughgoing nature, has naturally a more adequate foundation in reason, where it is not rooted in mere indifference or traditional hostility to religion.

Religious man, however, is in general as thoughtful and enquiring as the professed non-believer, and often more so. He, too, ponders wonderingly upon the truth of his creed, and he, too, is for ever thinking upon the great mysteries of existence. A philosophy of religion is indispensable to the thoughtful worshipper. It is not the sole prerogative of doubt to examine the credentials of faith. The devout gaze into the beyond and seek, if haply they may find, some cogent evidence of the reality of Him with whom they have to do. Their search is not always rewarded. "Oh that I knew where I might find Him" is not the ironical prayer of scepticism. It is the cry of a soul in distress, passionately confident of God's existence, and seeking earnestly for confirming and experiential proof of His reality and accessibility. Thus does faith call reason to her aid, and rests doubly assured that above and beyond "the boundaries of space and time,

of melancholy space and doleful time," transcendent yet immanent, exists a Divine Reality, personal, omnipotent, and responsive.

Prayer is a stupendous phenomenon. Wherever the traveller goes among the human race he finds man crying to the supernatural. Viewed universally, it is an imposing and impressive spectacle. A whole world of people so to speak, expressing in prayer and sacrifice their belief that the Divine exists and can be found of those that seek Him. From cloister, minaret, and tent, in solemn secrecy and in the pomp of publicity, this universal utterance of the human heart arises. In all ages it has been characteristic of man. If God exists, this universal phenomenon is but man's natural search for and reaction to Him. If God is non-existent, then prayerful man has been for ever calling out his needs into the empty void, and religion is what Freud calls it in his recent book, "a great illusion."

Seeing, therefore, that the problem of the validity of prayer resolves itself ultimately into that of the real and objective existence of God, let us ascertain what can be said upon the latter question in the light of the challenge of the New Psychology.

(A) *Prayer and Projection*.—If the fact of the existence of God be disputed, that of man's belief in that existence must be accounted for. So universal a phenomenon as the religious postulate of the real and experiential existence of God must be accounted for. What have those psychologists who dispute the validity of religious experience to say with regard to its origins? Although differing widely in their theories of the nature and origin of man's belief in God, they are at one in attributing that belief in whole or in part to the projective processes of the mind.

Now this process, which is demonstrably common to us all, is that activity whereby some mental content is projected upon or attributed to an objective entity. It may

take the form of the rejection of certain elements in the mind and the associating them with some other personality, or it may be an idealizing process which places out in the external world an ideal personality which one conceives should be there, or the investing some existent person with the ideal attributes one desires that person should possess. The classical illustration of the latter process is that of the young man who idealizes his betrothed, and attributes to her excellencies, graces, and virtues invisible to eyes other than his own. "This process is known as projection, and consists in attributing parts of the mental content to outside entities. In projection, as in repression, the mind refuses to acknowledge part of its own content; but instead of refusing attention to the existence of the content in question, it recognizes the existence while denying the ownership. The ownership of the content in question is too painful or too sublime to be compassed within the limits of its weakness, and an external substitute is sought, whether as scapegoat or support."*

Now the study of projection is of primary importance to the psychology of prayer. First of all, because in itself it is a necessary element in the study of psychology generally; and, secondly, because its exposition tends in the hands of some modern schools of psychological thought to reduce the whole of religious experience to pure subjectivity. As we have seen, both Freud and Jung do not hesitate to make religion subjective, and therefore illusory. Thus, Freud in his "Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life," says: "As a matter of fact, I believe that a large portion of the mythological conception of the world which reaches far into the most modern religions *is nothing but psychology projected into the outer world.*" The dim perception (the endo-psychic perception, as it were) of psychic factors and relations of the unconscious

* A. G. Tansley, "New Psychology," p. 155.

was taken as a model in the construction of a *transcendental reality*, which is destined to be changed again by science into *psychology* of the *unconscious*. It is difficult to express in other terms; the analogy to paranoia must come here to our aid. We venture to explain in this way the myths of Paradise, and the fall of man, of God, of good and evil, of immortality, and the like, that is to transform *metaphysics* into metapsychology.”*

What, precisely, is meant by “metapsychology” it is a little difficult to see, but it is obvious from this quotation where the Freudian school would lead us in the matter of religious belief. It would deny to the prayerful consciousness any reference to objective reality, and would reduce the claims of religious experience to mere subjectivity. Let us examine the facts.

The claim that projection is a universal process must be allowed. It must be conceded with Tansley that it “plays an extremely important part—perhaps the most important part of all—in the universal effort to arrive at mental harmony.” In religion particularly this process of projection is apparent. The conception of God is coloured by anthropomorphism, and the prayers of religious man afford many striking examples of this tendency of man to make gods in his own image. As might be expected, anthropomorphism and theriomorphism are predominant in primitive and savage worship. Anthropomorphism may be physical, or psychical, or both—*i.e.*, the gods are conceived as having bodies like humans, or as having minds similar in their working to that of the worshipper. An object such as a stone or a claw may be personified and be credited with quasi-human powers, or an animal may be invested with human powers of deliberation and jurisdiction—a process which is found to some extent in children and even in animals. Children at play will personify all manner of objects, and in such personification

* “Psycho-pathology of Everyday Life,” p. 309.

they are merely re-enacting the sober and religious practices of the childhood of the human race. It is not difficult to find examples of anthropomorphic projection in the early history of religion. The universal belief in the power of magic owes its sway to the attribution of human feelings and susceptibilities to the powers beyond. The strange admixture of inferiority and superiority in the conceptions of magico-religious worship has already been recognized, and in the light of our study of projective anthropomorphism it takes on a further significance. It is illustrative of the naïve attribution of human powers and susceptibilities to the spirits and gods.

It is indisputably true that religion everywhere is deeply coloured by human ideas and social relationships. Such is the fact. Several inferences have been drawn from this fact of religious life, as was shown in the quotation from Freud and in the allusion to the views of other psychologists. One inference is that religious experience is purely subjective. Being so deeply coloured by human conceptions, it must be entirely human. There need be no objective reality corresponding to this projective impulse of the human mind. Thus, a relative truth is attributed to the religious idea; it serves its purpose as a stabilizing and conserving factor in human evolution, and the time has not yet arrived when humanity is so far advanced as to be able to dispense with the help of projection.

This theory is very clearly put by Tansley.* He applies it very plausibly and consistently to the whole field of general religious beliefs. Primitive man attributes to the forces of nature which seem to act so arbitrarily a nature akin to his own, it being the only nature he has any knowledge of. The forces of nature are, therefore, personified and gods are made in the image of man. The tribes is personified as the tribal god, and, in so far as the individual conflicts with the tribal god by egoism, he sins, and is

* "New Psychology," pp. 157 ff.

punished. From polytheism evolves the dualistic personification of good and evil, God and the devil, to whom are attributed, by projection, the good and bad impulses respectively. God is always superior to the devil because the reverse would be too painful to contemplate. A further advance is seen in the banishment of the devil altogether, and to God is attributed both good and apparent evil. This process of projection is illustrated by the conceptions of the nature of God, which vary according to human preoccupations. Thus, He is powerful Creator, or stern Law-giver, Just, Merciful, Militant, Loving, etc. With the rise of the spiritual autonomy of the individual, God became simply the projection of the ethical self. There may arise conflict between the God of the herd and the God of the ethical self, as, for example, in the case of patriots and conscientious objectors in the Great War.

Such, in brief, is Tansley's application of the principles of the New Psychology to the facts of human religious development. He is fairly representative of the attitude of the modern schools of religious evolution.

Jung has quite an elaborate exposition of the idea in terms of Scripture—it has almost a sermonic appeal. He shows the makeshift character of suppressing and forgetting as affording relief from mental conflict. "The religious projection offers a much more effectual help." Quoting such passages as "Cast all your anxiety upon Him because He careth for you" (1 Pet. v. 7), he shows how in religion "the burdening complex of the soul is given over to the divinity." But religion has a clearly defined biological value. "The conscious projection towards which the Christian education aims offers, therefore, a double benefit: first, one is kept conscious of the conflict (sins) of two opposing tendencies mutually resistant, and through this one prevents a known trouble from becoming, by means of repressing and forgetting, an unknown

and therefore so much more tormenting sorrow. Secondly, one lightens one's burden by surrendering it to Him to whom all solutions are known. One must not forget that the individual psychologic roots of the deity set up as real by the pious are concealed from him, and that he, although unaware of this, still bears the burden alone and is still alone with his conflict."*

Although repudiating the objective claims of Christianity, Jung appreciates its value and would fain still preserve it. "The Christian religion seems to have fulfilled its great biological purpose in so far as we are able to judge. It has led human thought to independence, and has lost its significance, therefore, to a yet undetermined extent; in any case, its dogmatic contents have become related to Mithracism. In consideration of the fact that this religion has rendered nevertheless inconceivable service to education, one cannot reject it *eo ipso* to-day. It seems to me that we might still make use in some way of its form of thought, and especially of its great wisdom of life which for two thousand years has been proved to be efficacious" (p. 85). From this it will appear that the Zurich Professor is at one with his former master, Freud, in regarding modern Christianity as a survival and, in view of the great changes in human development, an anachronism. The divine is a projection of the conflict-burdened mind, a human creation revealing at all points the marks of human handiwork.

Another theory is offered in explanation of the fact relating to the projective action of the human mind—viz., that of religious biologists of all creeds and schools. This is to the effect that the human colouring so predominant in religious experience does not invalidate that experience. On the contrary, it is averred that if revelations from the supernatural do enter the human mind, they must be mediated by the human consciousness and expressed in

* "Psychology of the Unconscious," p. 76.

terms of human experience, and must, therefore, of necessity reflect human habits of thought. Now it is obvious that the acceptance of the position occupied by Jung and Tansley and thinkers of similar schools means the rejection of all belief in the objective reference of prayer. It is imperative, therefore, to enquire whether, when we have admitted the facts relating to religious projection, we have *ipso facto* to sacrifice belief in the validity of the great Christian postulates respecting the reality of God and the consequent possibility of communion with Him.

In this connection it will be well to remember the general truth that all knowledge of reality is mediated by mental processes, and that we can have no such knowledge which is not affected and coloured by the mind that perceives the reality. The mind is never a mere *tabula rasa*, as Locke would have it; indeed, it is reasonable to suppose that in the simplest act of perception our awareness of an object is determined in its precise character by the form and previous content of the mind. Whatever theory be held as to the nature of consciousness, it would be clearly contrary to the facts established by physiology and psychology to assert the absoluteness and independence of ideas held separate only by arbitrary abstraction. We never experience pure perception. Perceiving takes time, and is always coloured to a greater or less degree by memories from which we are never able completely to abstract it.

The epoch-making introduction of the Theory of Relativity has done much to make plain the subjectivity of all knowledge of reality. There is no such thing as absolute space and time—they are variable and relative to the translation of systems. Moreover, in all our concepts of space and time we are using images which have no real identity with that which we perceive as temporal. Einstein's theory has demonstrated conclusively that even in physical science our knowledge is relative and involves

arbitrary assumption of the absolute character of space and time; and that Einstein's Copernican discovery is no iconoclastic dream is proved by his solution of the now well-known problem of the difference between the astronomical observation of the precision of the perihelion of Mercury and the corresponding calculations.

"The essence of it (Relativity) is to introduce the bane of the physicist, subjectivism, into the arcana of physical science. It shows that it is impossible to abstract from the mind of the observer and treat his observation as themselves absolute and independent in their objectivity. The study of nature has revealed to us that the nature we study is not independent of the mind which studies it. There is no absolute physical reality which a mind may contemplate in its pure independence of the contemplator and the conditions of his contemplation. The new principle is that every observer is himself the absolute and not, as has hitherto been supposed, the relative centre of the universe. There is no universe common to all observers and private to none. The work of physical science is to co-ordinate the observations of observers, each of whom uses his own co-ordinates and for whom there is no common measure."*

Kant's discovery has made it for ever impossible for us to ignore the part played by the synthetized operations of the mind in the act of knowledge. Ludwig Noire may be guilty of Boswellian hero-worship when in his historic introduction to Max Müller's translation of the "Critique of Pure Reason" he calls the Königsberg philosopher "the greatest philosophical genius that has ever dwelt upon earth"; but all subsequent philosophical thought owes an immeasurable debt to Kant, in spite of the weakness of his psychology and the absence from his system of a properly developed logic. For Kant the ego is the focus of all thought, "the order and conformity to law in the

* H. Wildon Carr, "Principles of Relativity," pp. 22, 23.

phenomena we call nature we ourselves introduce." This famous dictum, with modifications, remains true. The synthetized self exercises upon the elements of reality an interpreting or reconstructive process. It does not create the specific character of these elements. All knowledge, whether secular or religious, is mediated, and as such represents reality in terms of mental activity and mediation.

Pursuing this line of thought, we meet an old problem of epistemology—viz., that of the validity of analogical reasoning. It has been clearly demonstrated that the nature of the divine is conceived on the analogy of human nature, and here, again, we need to remember that the use of analogy enters conspicuously into all reasoning. Apart from some form of analogical symbolism it would not be possible to acquire knowledge. Without digressing too far into the problems of logic we may note that in the act of judgment it is not bare identity that is affirmed to exist between subject and predicate, but a certain degree of relevancy. The predicate of the judgment itself, possessing a meaning associated with certain images, is a significant sign by means of which certain elements in experience are construed. The phenomenon of language, which we have already found of interest in connection with the growth of self-consciousness, is a systematized employment of analogical signs and symbols.

Enough has now been said to show that religion in general, and prayer in particular, may plead guilty to the charge of anthropomorphism without sacrificing their claim to validity. All knowledge is so dependent on the mediating intelligence that pure perception never exists, and science is itself dependent upon relevancy in the use of analogy and sign. The projective impulse, *per se*, is a constitutive element in man's mental life. Like all other constituents it demands control by reason, and can only make a valid contribution to knowledge when a relatively

perfect balance is attained between the operative factors in the mind.

Religious knowledge, like secular knowledge, is essentially progressive, and both are inevitably mediated by the personality. The cruder and more weird projections of prayerful man are paralleled by the projections of the physicist. We find, as we should expect, that the road to knowledge is long, upward, and winding, and at all stages of his progress man sees reality through mental media of more or less appropriate colouring. Let it be admitted, by all means, that religious knowledge is relative, for without that relativity knowledge of reality would be for ever beyond us. "Personality is thus the gateway through which all knowledge must inevitably pass. . . . It follows that philosophy and science are in the strict sense of the word precisely as anthropomorphic as theology, since they are alike limited by the conditions of human personality and controlled by the forms of thought which human personality provides."*

It is, therefore, not sufficient to offer, as a proof of the invalidity of prayer, the theory that it is an exercise derivable from the projective impulse which places out in the universe of not-self a being fashioned according to the hopes and desires of the prayerful consciousness. If there were a being such as the suppliant conceives to exist and with whom he conceives himself to be in communion, he could not know such a being apart from projection of one sort or another. And, moreover, we should expect his knowledge to be coloured by, and expressed in terms of, the social and economic conditions of his age; which is precisely what is indicated by the examples of anthropomorphic thought already adduced. It is not sufficient to argue in reply that we are deliberately confusing two sorts of projection, that of normal cognitive activity—that is, the projection of categories of thought—and the pro-

* Illingworth, "Personality Human and Divine," p. 25.

jection of our desires and imaginings. The distinction does not really touch the point under consideration, which is the *fact* of projective activity and its essential normality, and not the mental factor predominant in the process. It is untrue, in any case, to limit the content of religious knowledge to the volitional and affective. Assuming the existence of a supreme Being, it would be in the highest degree improbable that the savage mind would cognize such a Being in terms as reasonable, and true to life, as those in which the civilized and more philosophical mind would think Him. There is a world of difference between the prayer of the Santee Indians to their sacred buffalo—"Grandfather, venerable man, thy children have made this feast for you. May the food thus taken cause them to live and bring good fortune"*—and such a prayer as that of J. G. Whittier:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways,
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

Nobody would expect the Santee Indians to produce so sublime a hymn as that of Whittier, any more than the American poet would have addressed a cajoling prayer to a domesticated buffalo. In other words, upon the assumption that there is a divine reality corresponding to the religious needs of man, we should expect that, according to man's development on the scale of evolution, so he would be able to conceive of that Being and would express the nature of the supramundane in terms of his own individual and social experience.

The Christian apologist need not be concerned, therefore, to deny that prayer is characterized by projection. It is the normal method of man's intelligent experience of

* Farnell, "E. R.," pp. 177, 178.

external reality. "It is of the greatest moment to realize that religious belief has no interest in denying that the idea of God is a projection. What it has strenuously to combat is the doctrine that the idea is nothing more than a projection."*

Tansley seems to recognize this when he says ("New Psychology, p. 161): "Projection seems to be as inevitable a function of the human mind as rationalization, and we cannot look forward to a time when either will fall into disuse." One wonders why, in the same paragraph, he speaks with so much caution respecting the "truth" of the substance of religion. If the "inevitable function of the human mind" can lead us only to a religious attitude the substance of which is a subjective or purely relative "truth," we may well despair and avow ourselves pessimists. If man is cursed with such a function, a will-o'-the-wisp which calls him on to nothing objectively substantial, then there is room for Homer's sigh: "There is nothing more wretched than man of all things that breathe and are."

Now it is manifest that the aspects of the New Psychology we have been considering lead inevitably to a philosophy of subjectivism and naturalism. Let us examine in more detail the philosophical background of these anti-religious theories.

(B) *Prayer and Subjectivism*.—According to the author of "Das Gebet," three distinct constituents enter into the structure of the prayer-experience: "Es sind näherhin drei Momente, welche die innere Struktur des Gebetserlebnisses bilden: der Glaube an den lebendigen, persönlichen Gott, der Glaube an seine reale, unmittelbare Präsenz und der dramatische Verkehr, in den der Mensch mit dem als gegenwärtig erlebten Gott tritt"† (p. 489).

* "The Psychological Approach to Religion," p. 20.

† On a closer examination we find three moments which constitute the inner structure of the experience of prayer: the belief in

The most important of these, for the purposes of our discussion, is the first—belief in a living, personal God. The second—belief in His real and immediate presence—brings to the fore the problem of the immanence of God, which we shall observe to have special significance for the study of prayer.

In our discussion of the relationship of the mind to the body, we concluded that the materialistic hypothesis ruled out prayer altogether. The same result follows when we apply the theory to the other side of the prayer-relationship, that of the existence of God. Materialism will have none of the supernatural. It may, in some of its forms, admit a universe-worship, but the God of religion is not necessary on a purely mechanistic view of life. On the other hand, the Christian belief in God is that in a personal, ethical, infinite, and self-revealing Being, who is both World Ground and Supreme Value. By the Christian believer God is conceived as being transcendent and yet as entering into living and active relationship with mankind, making possible the intercourse of prayer.

It is plain that the existence of such a Being can never be proved by the reasoning of deductive logic. For this reason the famous Theistic Proofs are discredited to-day, in their original form, as well-meaning but logically inadequate attempts to demonstrate the existence of God. "God in the sense that spiritual religion demands can never be reached by any deductive argument."* He can, however, be reached by that rational faith which is rightly regarded as much more than mere intellectualism, and without which no system can hope to succeed in relating the facts of experience to a unifying and explanatory prin-

a living, personal God, the belief in His actual, immediate presence, and the active intercourse into which man enters with the God whose presence he feels.

* Galloway, "Philosophy of Religion," p. 394.

ciple. Such faith is not the peculiar possession of the theologian. It is what Dean Inge calls "a prompting which impels us to look for a *meaning* in life—to seek behind the veil of ever-changing phenomena some permanent and solid reality."* It expresses itself in every effort of reason to understand the universe, and brings even professing agnostics into a quasi-religious attitude in the search for truth. Professor Seeley made no mistake when he asserted that art and science "have the nature of religion."

By such an attitude to reality, by focussing the whole personality on the search for the Absolute, as opposed to, and presupposed by, the relative and mutable, by such man can attain to God. But God transcends conceptual thought. Logical thought, as such, will never reach Him. The conditions of logical proof cannot be applied. For the religious rationalist, if he be wholly devoted to the quest for intellectual satisfaction, the existence of God can never be more than an hypothesis which may satisfy the reason as an explanation of the facts of life. But that is not the God of healthy-minded and truly rational religion. In the same sense it is plain that "theology is not religion." "It is derogatory to the Divinity to wish to enclose it in our own concepts, in our own inadequate symbols. Until religion abandons the attempt to conceive the Inscrutable Being in a definite manner, the conflict will continue with science, which will be right to criticize these false concepts. But scientific necessity in its turn will not have to be driven to such a point as to deny that imperishable truth which lies at the foundation of religion—the existence of an Unknowable Power which surpasses all thought and all human symbol."†

The consideration of the essential limitations of reason in its bearing upon religious ontology brings us right into

* "Faith and its Psychology," p. 223.

† Professor Aliotta, "Reality," p. 163.

the heart of our subject, for the subjectivistic theories of the New Psychology regard the intellect as the sole arbiter of objectivity. The standpoint of certain modern psychologists is that of subjectivism. The God of religion has no real objectivity. He is a projection, and religion is an illusion. Freud's argument in "The Future of an Illusion" is as follows: Culture (*Kultur*), by which he means "all those respects in which human life has raised itself above animal conditions . . . and I disdain to separate culture and civilization"—culture is founded upon compulsory labour ("for the masses are lazy and unintelligent") and instinctual renunciation. But instincts are not satisfied by mere renunciation. Men must be recompensed for the sacrifice involved by the suppression of their impulses. Thus, the peculiar value of religious ideas lies in the consolation they give to man's self-esteem, which is so seriously menaced by the supremacy of nature. The religious attitude is a continuation of an infantile prototype. "Once before one has been in such a state of helplessness: as a little child in one's relationships to one's parents. For one had reason to fear them, especially the father, though at the same time one was sure of his protection against the dangers then known to one. Man gives the forces of nature the characteristics of the father, makes them into gods, thereby following not only an infantile, but also . . . a phylogenetic prototype."*

Freud, therefore, proposes to exclude religious doctrine altogether from "the motivation of cultural laws." "The time has probably come to replace the consequence of repression by the results of rational mental effort, as in the analytic treatment of neurotics." Through scientific knowledge of the reality of the world we shall increase our power and regulate our lives.

This argument is fundamentally the same as that of Leuba in his works on the psychology of religion. For

* Pp. 29, 30.

Leuba the object of religious experience is an ideal humanity, conceived of as "creative energy." The unconscious racial gregariousness projects an ideal Being for its own satisfaction, and that is the God of religion. This illusion has survival value, for it gives man a sense of helpful companionship in the struggle for existence. "It is truly a remarkable habit," he says, "that of imagining in other beings coveted powers and virtues, and of turning these powers, by supplications and offerings, to one's own benefit, or of enriching oneself with these virtues by means of sympathetic communion."* Durkheim, whom we have quoted earlier in this essay, and the other leaders of the sociological school in France substitute society for the God of religion. Religion has its sole origin in the authority and sanctions of society, and is therefore an illusion, being without a real objective reference.

Now it is rather disturbing to discover that so valuable an aid in the battle of life as these psychologists are at pains to prove religion to be is after all based upon an illusion. "Religion and the enhancement of life are inseparably associated," says Leuba.† "Religion has performed great services for human culture," says Freud.‡ Illusion, confessedly, works better than reality in the struggle for survival. Civilization, culture, as we understand it, could not have developed without religion. This much is admitted. The time has now come, however, to recognize the true nature of this hoary friend of the race and proclaim it to be an illusion. One is compelled to ask, in very alarm for the rationality of the universe, What pragmatic test have we of reality? If so gigantic an illusion, as religion must be on this theory, has been indispensable to the race in the struggle for survival, and if man's success in that struggle has been proportionate

* "A Psychological Study of Religion," p. 112.

† "Psychology of Religious Mysticism," p. 35.

‡ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

to his belief in an illusion, what becomes of our confidence in any aspect of the knowledge of reality?

Freud has a sublime confidence in the future of science, but science is another form of man's endeavour to arrive at a knowledge of reality; and what of the possibility that some future generation will appraise as a useful illusion man's present-day belief in the correspondence of reality to his scientific knowledge? "We believe," says Freud, "that it is possible for scientific work to discover something about the reality of the world through which we can regulate our life. If this belief is an illusion, then we are in the same position as you; but science has shown us by numerous and significant successes that it is no illusion."* Yet he admits, on the following page, that the nature of scientific progress is that "a rough approximation to the truth is replaced by one more carefully adjusted, which in its turn awaits a further approach to perfection." All these approximations are believed in, of course, at the time of their currency, and they are useful. Matter is not what science formerly said it was. Nor is the atom. Nor even the electron. And time and space have become synthetized into a four-dimensioned space-time, while the Newtonian law of gravitation has been displaced by a better "approximation" in the shape of Einstein's theory of relativity. We are not disparaging scientific advance, but merely indicating that the Viennese professor has proved too much. Religion, after all, has also some "significant successes" to its credit. The biological success attributed to it is no mean achievement, and if Freud decides for reality in the case of science because of its approximate successes, we can at least make out a respectable claim for validity in the case of religion.

Freud rests his hope in science. It is significant that he gives us the following confession of faith in scientific knowledge. "No, *science is no illusion. But it would*

* *Ibid.*, p. 95.

be an illusion to suppose that we could get anywhere else what it cannot give us."* To science, therefore, we must look for all the knowledge of reality we can ever hope to possess. Obviously enough, naturalism, as opposed to supernaturalism, is at the root of all these theorizings of the New Psychology. Psychology could never give them the sweeping conclusions they draw. As we have indicated elsewhere, the mental facts of the religious life lend themselves to an interpretation not inimical to religious belief. The Freudians, however, interpret the phenomena of religion in the light of their philosophical systems which, in the last resort, are purely naturalistic.

Let us examine this philosophy of naturalism, by which is meant, not pantheistic naturalism, but that which embodies a purely mechanistic interpretation of life. It is allied to (a) mechanism, and (b) intellectualism. It dispenses with both teleology and spirit. It reduces all religious phenomena to natural, biological, and psychological causes, and, if consistent, rules out purpose from nature. It reduces everything to quantitative terms, and rules out the qualitative. Quality cannot be measured. In the realm of psychology the naturalistic view is that of determinism—viz., that at any given time the contents of the mind can be explained in terms of previous experience. Particularly in psycho-pathology, the neuroses can often be traced back to an infantile œdipus complex. So in regard to the whole of nature, naturalism is deterministic and non-teleological. The task of science is to discover the natural antecedent of every phenomenon and reduce all nature to a system of necessary and quantitatively measurable sequences. Epistemologically regarded, naturalism is intellectualistic; biologically and psychologically, it is mechanistic.

In support of this philosophy of naturalism, its exponents point to the established laws of the conservation of

* *Ibid.*, p. 98.

matter and energy. Psychology, they say, has demonstrated the essential and commensurable relationship between the psychological and physiological processes, and consciousness may yet prove explicable purely in terms of exact science. Moreover, the evolutionary hypothesis explains on a purely naturalistic basis the development of life individually and socially from its earliest forms. Even the "impregnable rock" of Scripture has been shown by the scientific canons of the Higher Criticism to be a "natural book." And, further, the so-called supernatural revelations received by the mystic are pathological, and all religious phenomena can be explained on subjectivistic theories.

To all this it might be replied that the very theory of evolution itself, in its post-Darwinian forms, strikes at the root and foundation of mechanism. On thoroughgoing mechanistic principles there is no room for new qualitative forms such as have been proved to arise in the course of time. "Mechanism asserts quantitative permanence and determinism by mathematical law; evolution asserts qualitative transformation which cannot be calculated mathematically."* Moreover, the application of the concept of evolutionary progression to mind itself has led, logically enough, to the conclusion that the so-called categories of thought share the mutability and relativity of other organs in biological development.

It could be shown, further, that the philosophy of naturalism is committed to the "epiphenomenal" solution of the psycho-physical problem, to which reply has been made in the foregoing chapter. Mechanism cannot account for consciousness without making materialistic assumptions which are discredited by the latest tendencies toward spiritual monism in philosophical thought.

Yet, again, reference might be made to the limitation of metrical methods in experimental psychology. The

* Inge, "Science Religion and Reality," p. 361.

laws of Fechner and Weber are formulations of certain measurable regularities in psycho-physical movement, but the qualitative differences of thought can never be recorded by scale and pointer. Or, further, what of the deterministic implications of the philosophy of naturalism? The Freudians postulate the mechanistic determinism of all thought, wish, and action. The personal consciousness of freedom, of open possibilities, of spontaneity of thought, the assurance of contingency in experience—these are illusions. Abnormal types of thought have been clearly demonstrated as mechanically determined aberrations, and as research goes on it will prove equally demonstrable that all normal mental activity is causally related to antecedents in the conscious, or, more frequently, in the unconscious, mind. The personal feeling of conviction as to the freedom of the will is itself mechanically determined.

We are thus brought by the New Psychology face to face with the perennial problem of the freedom of the human will. Although it is not along this well-worn track that we intend to seek the final refutation of subjectivism, we pause to note the weakness of determinism. On this theory, moral freedom is a fiction. In any given instance, or set of instances, man acts in the only way he can act. It is difficult to see how there can be any question of moral responsibility at all on the determinist theory. Good and evil are not qualities that can be predicated of an automaton. But perhaps the best reply to determinism is the *reductio ad absurdum*. Logically followed out, this hypothesis reduces all deliberation and reflection to an illusion. Any judgment of fact or value that I make is based, not on the question of truth or falsehood, but solely on the effect of my heredity, environment, and past experiences, as they determine my approval or disapproval of any presentation. That is to say, I accept no argument as sound because it really is sound,

but because of a certain mechanical reaction to the situation. It cannot be denied, of course, that many of our judgments are predominantly impulsive, but to remove from thought all spontaneity, all real discrimination, is to subvert the foundations of reason itself and plunge us into a mad universe. Man acts always as he is predisposed to act, and prejudice, instead of being a relative term, becomes absolute as applied to human judgment.

We now come to the most fundamental objection to the Freudian faith in the exclusive ability of science to apprehend the absolute. The subjectivistic philosophy is based upon pure intellectualism. It must begin with the doubtful assumption that reality can be known by no other way than through rational processes. Emotion and volition give us no criterion of objectivity. Through reason alone can knowledge of the universe be gained. Suppose, however, it be proved that the science upon which Freud bases his optimism is necessarily arbitrary and selective, and that while it may succeed in measuring quantity, quality or value is incommensurable in terms of mathematical scale or formula, and is therefore outside the scope of science. It will then follow that while the quantitative approach to reality gives us real and valid knowledge, there must be other means of apprehending its qualitative aspect. The scientific method gives us only one aspect or feature, and can never, therefore, be the sole criterion of objectivity.

We believe that this necessary limitation of the metrical methods of science can be proved for two reasons, both of which derive their force from the objectivity of value. First of all, it can be shown that science advances by conceptual abstraction, ignoring that which is not relevant to its purpose. By analysis and classification the scientist is ever dealing with similarities and differences of fact, discovering identity by analysis and seeking by classification to refer all similarities to an explanatory principle.

Now under such a process individuality disappears. For, by making abstractions of the common elements of experience, science ignores the variable aspects, which are significant for individuality. "A quartermaster who has to feed a battalion of 1,000 men must think of them not as men but as 'mouths.' For his purpose it is irrelevant that some are honest, others thieving, some illiterate, others highly educated, some stupid, others brilliant."* Science gives us a representation of reality which corresponds to it as a plan or diagram to a landscape. It cannot reveal, and is not concerned with, such æsthetic values as, for instance, would be emphasized by a masterly painting of that same landscape.

Secondly, it is clear that the intellect never works without some kind of interest, that scientific processes do themselves presuppose the fact of value or meaning, which is, nevertheless, extraneous to their realm. Upon the possession of a specific interest depends the character of one's study of experience. Thus, the artist and the scientist have their particular and distinct interests which, even if enjoyed by one and the same person, signify two distinct methods of approach to reality. Now interest involves meaning, and meaning involves value, and value is not to be expressed in terms of exact science. None the less, value is truly objective and real.

We are thus brought to realize the essential limitations of the scientific method. With the recognition of this restriction must come that of the inadequacy of the scientific interpretation of experience. Science can never give us the whole picture, and it is not to science, with its exclusive intellectualism, that we must look as the hope of the future. In its own sphere, that of measurement, science subsumes particular phenomena under general laws and renders inestimable practical service to humanity; but while it may say much, and say it authoritatively,

* "Reality," p. 84.

about conditions of life, it must ignore the ultimate meaning or value of life itself.

(C) *Prayer and the Reality of God.*—It is along this line of thought that we approach our initial problem, that of the validity of the idea of God. The psychological theories, which, being based on a naturalistic philosophy, regard religion as purely subjectivistic, are inadequate. There is more in reality than matter and quantity, more than can be known in the utilitarian terms of scientific abstraction. That something more is the intrinsic values which are known to us as the values of truth, beauty, and goodness—values logical, æsthetic, and ethical. The religious conviction is that these values are the attributes of ultimate reality, and that it is the pathway of valuation which leads man to that reality.

We have not set ourselves the task of “proving” the existence of the God of religion. Rather we have given reasons why proof, in the logical sense, cannot be forthcoming. But we are concerned to show that the avenue by which religious man approaches reality is most probably that which will give him real knowledge of it. For the prayerful consciousness, as we have seen, has volitional, cognitive, and affective elements within it, and the harmonious relationship and balance of these factors enables religious man to apprehend values which are really existent and constituent of an ultimate reality which he regards as God. Wisdom, goodness, and beauty are the existential values which religious man regards as manifestations of the Object of his faith. In God are conserved all values, and He is the Guarantor of the permanence of value. In following the path of valuation, devout man finds an Absolute Value, and if he is a philosopher he discovers that the World-Ground he has been seeking is none other than this Supreme Value. His philosophy, if it be in the line of modern developments, will be that of a spiritual monism. His Absolute will

be spirit, life, mind. His religion, if it be pure, will be spiritual. Both as philosopher and worshipper he will say, "God is a spirit," but as worshipper he will say of God the Supreme Value what all must say of any value they desire to apprehend and realize, "They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Thus interpreted, religion becomes the act of man in reaching out after the centre and ground of his value-judgment, a seeking to realize supreme value by entering into sympathetic communion with it. Scientific knowledge reveals only a fragment of ultimate reality, and pays small heed to the volitional and emotional needs of man. Pure religion and undefiled is that which leads man by way of harmonious spiritual development into the ever deepening apprehension of "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

In the course of a discussion on the nature of prayer we found prayerful man's idea of God to be that of a Being objectively existent, superior, personal, and responsive. The two last-named attributes are of special significance for a philosophical study of prayer. Is the idea of God as personal philosophically tenable, and can He be rationally conceived of as responsive to the needs of man?

"Perfect personality," says Lotze,* "is in God only; to all finite minds there is allotted but a pale copy thereof; the finiteness of the finite is not a producing condition of this personality, but a limit and a hindrance to its development." This conclusion is arrived at by the leading representative of the Neo-Kantian school after detailed examination of the opposing arguments. The main contention of the latter is that personality implies limitation, for self-consciousness is derived from a sense of contrast between the self and the not-self. This idea of distinction, of antithesis, is fundamental to personality as we conceive

* "Microcosmos," ii., p. 688.

of it. *Ohne Du kein Ich*. How, then, can personality be attributed to an Absolute, Infinite Being without unwarranted and unphilosophical anthropomorphism? The reply to Lotze to this objection is, we think, convincing. It is to the effect that the sharp antithesis between the ego and the non-ego is a condition and feature of the *development* of personality, but as that development is achieved, the opposition diminishes, and the higher stages of growth are marked by integration and unification rather than reference to outward reality. It is a mark of human limitation and finitude that human personality is dependent for its definition and development upon external contrasts. God is self-conditioned and independent of external reference. In this way the religious postulate of divine personality receives philosophical support. Prayer is, in great measure, grossly anthropomorphic, as was illustrated in the chapter on projection; but in its purer and more rational forms prayer conceives a God who is personal, not as man is personal, but as one who is self-contained and free from all the limitations and contradictions of human experience, and growth in His likeness is growth away from all that prevents man from attaining internal completeness and coherence.

Of fundamental importance to prayer is the conception of God as immanent. Pantheism postulates pure immanence, and deism pure transcendence, and in neither system can a place logically be found for prayer. For pantheism merges the human consciousness into the Divine and identifies man's will with that of God, robbing the prayer-relationship of all definiteness and meaning and obliterating moral distinction. Deism, on the other hand, makes for isolation and apartness, and destroys the basis of prayer, which is the belief in a living and loving relationship between the human and the Divine. Theism postulates an immanent and transcendent God, who is at once the Object of reverence and responsive to man. Prayer

is based upon belief in this accessibility and responsiveness. Faith in the immanence of God is vital to it. A God who is afar off in virtue of His essential perfection may not be reached by human supplication, but One who is immanent, and for whom our every trouble matters, is a God with whom we can enter into prayerful relationship and enjoy real intercourse. The *unmittelbare Präsenz* of which Heiler speaks is fundamental to the *dramatische Verkehr*.

It is thus that we reach the high conception of prayer contained in the Christian Gospel. The Christian doctrine of prayer is founded upon the Fatherhood of God, as revealed and taught by Jesus Christ. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers." As the son shares the nature of the father, so is there a community of nature between God the Father and the created spirit of men, and prayer becomes the desire of the son to approximate more and more closely to that perfection of which he bears the image. Prayer is a search for and a submission to the Divine purpose, "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will." It is active and willing co-operation with that purpose.

Probably this practical and non-mystical age is suffering religiously from its disregard of the fundamental fact of the immanence of God in His creation. Philosophically, we have discarded the old teleology represented by Paley and have replaced it by the more adequate conception of an inner purpose working itself out in nature, evolutionary development from within. We have, as it were, replaced transcendent teleology by immanent teleology. Religiously, however, we are all too slow to understand that the Divine purpose is being realized in the process of creation of free, self-conscious, and worshipful spirits, that God has made us for Himself, and that while we work out our own

salvation with fear and trembling, He is working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. But once the fact of the indwelling and all-pervading Spirit of God the Father is realized, prayer becomes a process of understanding and growing conformity to His will and to His nature. "True prayer," says B. H. Streeter,* "must be that which *succeeds* in being (what all prayer *aspires* to be) a realized contact with creative Spirit—the Spirit that makes all things new. If so, the test in one's own life whether prayer is really prayer or merely pious auto-suggestion will be the extent to which it inspires to bold and constructive action and to moral and intellectual initiative."

Finally, prayer is experience of God. The wealth of that experience depends upon the approximation of the personality of the worshipper to perfection. For it is reasonable to argue that if God is Ultimate Reality—as the Christian must maintain against the philosophy of monism—then He will be the Supreme Value and will be most fully apprehended by that human personality possessing the highest standard of values. From this there follow several inferences vital to the Christian doctrine of prayer. First, that the manifest perfection of Christ, which receives its verification in His peerless life and teaching, makes His apprehension of the nature of God uniquely true and valuable; second, that the more closely the Christian conforms to the peerless example of Christ, the better qualified he will be to experience knowledge of God; and, third, that the revelation of God as the Supreme Value effects in those who strive to apprehend it in Christ a growing elevation from lower to higher degrees of perfection in personality.

The Christian metaphysic is, as Dr. Temple declares, Christocentric (*Christus Veritas*). The sinless perfection of the Personality of Christ enabled Him to experience valid and full knowledge of Ultimate Reality, and thus

* "Reality," p. 292.

through His life and teaching convey to mankind a revelation of Supreme Value by which all other values are judged. Expressed in relation to prayer, this truth may be stated thus: Christ's unique apprehension of God made prayer for Him immediate fellowship with God, a communion which was in no way marred or distorted by mental or spiritual aberration. In Christ, prayer reaches its ideal form.

For this reason special significance attaches to the teaching of Christ, that approach to the Father must be by way of Himself. The Way is also the Truth and the Life, and the closer the Christian approximates to perfect personality as it is found in Christ, the fuller will be his apprehension of the truth and the more will the revelation of God in Christ prove redemptive by the interpretation of life, of power to attain.

We have endeavoured to bring into prominence the essential features of prayer in the light of its psychology, and have stressed the essential normality of this exercise. We have traced its development in the religious growth of the human race and have viewed it in the light of the leading concepts of modern psychological thought. Finally, we met the philosophical objections to prayer and emphasized the value of the doctrine of the immanence of the Spirit. We conclude with a sense of the immensity of the theme under discussion. Whatever the philosophical background of our faith in prayer, we cherish a great truth. For prayer is nothing less than the acceptance and working out of the vast possibilities of fellowship with God. We seek to understand the nature of spiritual intercourse with Him and to identify ourselves actively with His purposes therein revealed within us. And each step reveals another. We attain, and yet have not attained. The prayerful spirit is ever "reaching forth into those things which are before," approximating more and more

to the Divine likeness. That is the spirit of Anselm's great prayer :

“O God, Thou art Life, Wisdom, Truth, Bounty, and Blessedness, the Eternal, the only true Good. My God and my Lord, Thou art my hope and my heart's joy. I confess, with thanksgiving, that Thou hast made me in Thine image, that I may direct all my thoughts to Thee, and love Thee. Lord, make me to know Thee aright, that I may more and more love, and enjoy, and possess Thee. And since, in the life here below, I cannot fully attain this blessedness, let it at least grow in me day by day, until it all be fulfilled at last in the life to come. Here be the knowledge of Thee increased, and there let it be perfected. Here let my love to Thee grow, and there let it ripen; that my joy being here great in hope, may there in fruition be made perfect. Amen.”

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